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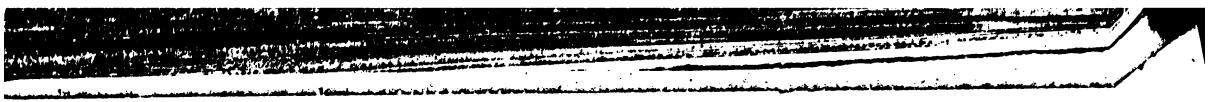

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LETTER FROM GENERAL CHRISTENSEN.

President Brooklyn Trust Co., and Vice-President of th Brooklyn Association for Improving the Condition of th Poor.

My Dear Mr. Day:—I thank you for having afforded m an opportunity to become acquainted with your book. have read it with intense interest. I think you have accon plished a great work in writing it. It sums up a powerf argument against the indolent charity which passively su mits to an imposition, now made a crime under our statute and it urges also a plea for deserving poverty that we ma not gainsay or evade.

Some of the scenes that you portray are fearfully realisti and the *exposé* offered in your work, it seems to me, mu rouse benevolently inclined men and women to a realizati dangerous conditions now existing, and persuade them adoption of those cautionary measures which your sto restingly points out.

artily approve of and commend the book to all wh interested in finding the best way to eliminate fraud an ption, the best way to reach the meritorious sufferer, ases of APPEALS FROM UNKNOWN APPLICANTS.

Faithfully Yours,
C. T. CHRISTENSEN.

BERT A. DAY.

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PRELUSIVE.

THE following lines will be found in a little book, published many years ago for the use of school children:

"What is Charity?
'Tis not to pause, when at the door
A shiv'ring brother stands,
To ask the cause that made him poor,
Or why he help demands."

This long-time-past excerpt, expresses the accepted sentiment of those days, respecting the bestowal of "relief." In this negative definition of "Charity," the old-time writer interprets this attribute as a blind impulse, under an injunction to waive intelligent inquiry in all applications for aid. While the alms-seeker at the door should receive, it was not permitted of the alms-giver—

"To ask the cause that made him poor,
Or why he help demands."

But a later experience, with newly developed con-
s. proved this to be a dangerous code of ethics.
r One, an honest applicant, worthily receives;
amber Two, an unworthy dissembler, follows after
l fraudulently simulates the real distress of his
r. in order that by so doing he may obtain a

g evil consequences of this blind ad-

e to an ancient interpretation of charitable duty,
ped dangerous conditions. We find them start-
described in a recent London report, wherein is
that, in one year, in the city of London alone,
ive millions of dollars were expended in (so-
) charity: and that, pauperism, nevertheless in-
d "with frightful rapidity."
alarm was sounded, and wise people held anxious
el. The situation was critical. Perhaps the afore-
nterpretation of "Charity" was a mistaken one.
nly this understanding of it had proved danger-
For these reasons a new exposition was sought,
; as its rationale, intelligent pre-examination.
ior authentication of the stories of alms-seekers
ow insisted upon as a cautionary preliminary to
estowal of alms. Before giving the aid asked
was required, as a condition precedent, that the
e attested.
perience has vindicated the necessity for this pre-
n, and now, methodical inquiry concerning the
of unknown applicants, is looked upon less as an
ly and impertinent intrusion.
s new sentiment has established as it has extended.
e have awakened to the realization of a better
ration of the Gospel of Relief, appreciating now,
Charity" and "Alms" may not always be syno
A larger interpretation of a Divine command
ceived, and one which involves a forethoughtful,
it as well, a loving consideration of appeals made
angers.
nversely, and to the confusion of an old-time prej-
a growing intelligence in this behalf recognizes
ith that, injury to *the recipient*, is the invited re-
f unintelligent bestowal; and that alms-giving is

more likely to be a synonym of *true* charity, when it *does* pause to—

> "——ask the cause that made him poor,
> Or why he help demands."

Thus the new regime, for which we are thankful; since under it, the alarming increase of vagrant pauperism has been arrested. It will continue further to yield to control, in proportion as organizations for intelligent investigation and for supplying employment are sustained; for it is mainly through such, that we may hope to hold in check those dangerous elements which, unrestrained, develop perilous moral deflection, and work injury to a good cause—The Improvement of the Condition of the Poor.

The object of the writer of this book will be accomplished, wherever its perusal shall convey this later and more Christian understanding of TRUE CHARITY.

THE MYSTERIOUS BEGGAR.

CHAPTER I.

MATRIMONY OR COLLAPSE!

"THERE goes Stanhope. He's drunk again."

This disapproving comment was uttered by the junior proprietor of a fashionable up-town New York hotel, and it applied to a young man who, at six o'clock in the morning, was meandering an unsteady progress across the rotunda of the hotel, evidently seeking the way to his room.

The clerk on duty, and to whom the observation was addressed, looked up from his writing. His eyes also followed the labored steps. As young Stanhope stumbled up the stairs and disappeared in the distance, he shook his head forebodingly and replied;

"Yes; Jem's been steaming it heavily the past fortnight."

"He's behind too, isn't he, on his account?" asked the proprietor.

"Over a month."

"Well, we can't allow this to go on." Then, after a moment's reflection, "What does he say?"

"Same old story: 'Expects a remittance from home. I don't think it'll ever materialize; but he'll pull himself together again. I've written about that he's N. G. now, for cer-

proprietor considered again for a moment and
ıve the stereotyed direction, "Well, you know
› do. Give him notice and don't delay about it.
him out if he don't square up, as soon as possi-

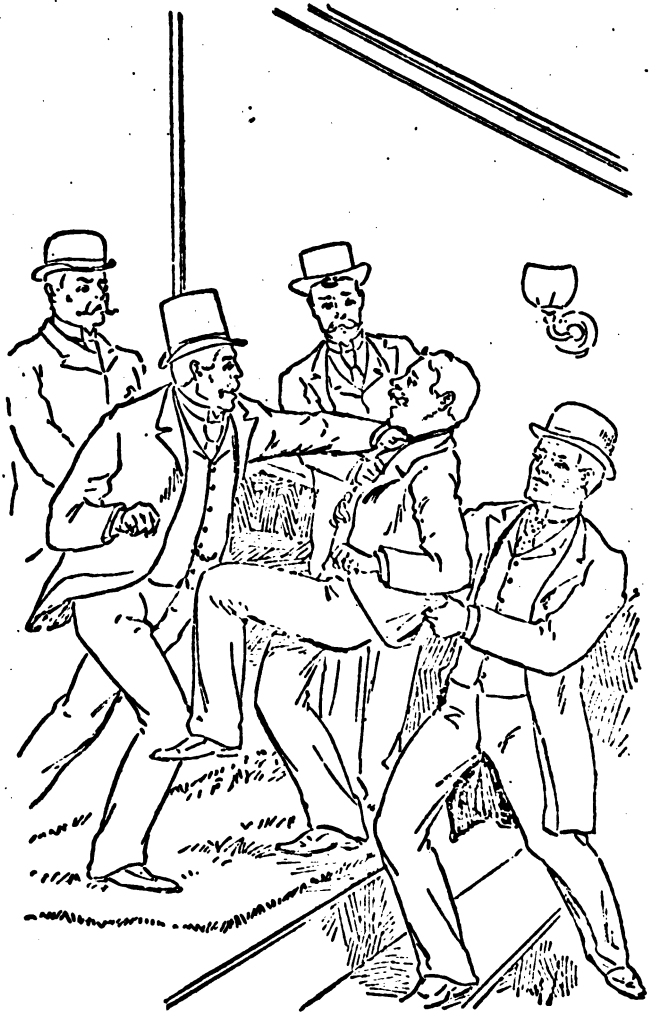
* * * * * *

ng the night just departed, Jem Stanhope had
desperately, and at the last, recklessly. Of late
gotten deep into financial straits. Something
e, he declared, must be accomplished. Accord-
›n the day previous, he had made it his special
ıs to pawn the most available articles in his pos-
, and with the sum thus realized he had made
" last stake."

final venture was essayed at a faro bank on
vay. He had played there frequently before.
ight of all nights though, was to mark the criti-
p d'essai for him.

r after hour he had been at it. Rising occasion-
› repaired to a buffet lunch with liquors, spread
for players. Here he had indulged intemper-
ı wine. Then again he would return and place
ts.

the results were disheartening; and his smiles
ıore and more desperate, his face hotter and its
more and more flushed, as his average losses
in increasing excess over the average winnings.
lonel" Burle, as he was known by name to
g men, dealt for the bank. There *were* sharp
s, who confidently affirmed that Colonel Burle
ıged" in his withdrawal of the alternate winning
ıing cards. Stanhope, remembering this, and as
ı seeking now an explanation for his uninter-
bad luck, began covertly to watch this man.



I DRAGGED HIM VIOLENTLY DOWN THE STAIRS. (Page 15.)

His mistrust appeared suddenly to find confirmation. He sprang to his feet. Flushed with liquor, rendered reckless by his losses and exasperated by the discovery made, he denounced Burle in language both fiery and profane:

"You rascally thief! You're cheating!"

"I know he is;" he continued, appealing to those about him; for by this time interested loungers had crowded up behind his chair. "I saw him change a card. He isn't 'straight,' and he knows it himself—damn him. If I——"

But his protestations and denunciations were cut short.

Not by Burle. That functionary took no notice of the charge. He remained seated and unmoved, continuing without retort, quietly to shuffle and draw the cards.

Other retainers, however, with speedy expedition, nevertheless without wordy demonstration or avowed purpose, at once interposed between this turbulent disturber and the bland devil at the head of the faro table. They adroitly pushed and alternately crowded the discomfited objector until they had him in close vicinity to the door. Then suddenly changing their t cs to more open assault, they dragged him violently ı the stairs and landed him breathless and dis- ·ed upon the sidewalk below. With purpose nger veiled, they admonished him in language ning and determined to—"Get out, and don't respectable place with any more of your —— ng."

had been in unscrupulous hands certainly, and realized the uselessness of further protest. He

made none. He abandoned all contest and quietly moved away.

Betaking himself to an "all-night" restaurant near by, he moodily ordered a four o'clock breakfast. "Let a bottle of claret come with it;" he added, as the waiter started off to execute his order. While eating his breakfast he sent for and drank a second bottle of wine.

Finally, as the broad morning light admonished, he unsteadily got upon his feet and found his way to his hotel.

Passing, as we have seen him, through the corridor, he reached his room. He lit the gas. There was no need of this. The early light was already coming in through the open window. However, his mind was confused, his condition semi-oblivious, and he merely followed a mechanical habit. Then he threw himself into an arm-chair and soliloquized:

"My cursed luck again! Burle *is* crooked for a fact. Why couldn't I have minded this tip. Surely I ought to have struck a 'straight' game this time of all times. Stevens said he wasn't just 'straight.' Guess Stevens was right."

Here he threw himself back and took in a deep inspiration; then, as his head fell forward again he yawned with a very wide mouth, and a very sonorous tone, that commenced very high up, and fell in chromatics through a very sleepy gamut. Recovering, he looked listlessly about him.

A note on the table now caught his eye. He took it up. Not with any apparent interest as though anxious to learn its contents. He had already recognized the clerk's *chirography*. *He easily conjectured its purport. After tearing open the envelope* and glancing over

the "Statement" which a few superscribed lines reminded him had now been rendered for the third time, he threw the paper back upon the table.

"I'm about closed out here. The next'll be a flat notice to quit. Closing act! Curtain falls!"

He proceeded next with a great deal of deliberation, attended with some difficulty, to draw off one of his boots. He gave his whole mind to the operation and finally succeeded. With it yet hanging from his hands, he paused as though to collect himself. He further considered the situation.

"I *might* try the races. But what's a fellow to do without money to back a horse? Borrow it!! Bah! The boys are passing along the shake now on me. I've borrowed too much already."

Here he fell into a mood and attitude of tipsy despair, from which he seemed to recover himself with considerable of an effort. Then again, with a start, as though a sudden realization of desperate necessity was upon him, he exclaimed in a thick whisper,

"Jane Duncan! You're my last stake. I'm almost distanced. Help me up this cursed home-stretch. They've fouled me. They've crowded me onto the rail. It's got to be money with matrimony now, or——"

But he was too far gone. He did not finish the conjectured alternative of his drunken dilemma. His head fell forward and his eyes closed. Soon the boot, which he still held in his hands, dropped with a loud noise from his listless fingers. The sound roused him, and with a last effort he addressed his wavering resolve to the removal of its fellow.

was a hard tug. But finally, kicking off this also,
ceed himself, and with tipsy deliberation

ıdes flapped noisily, the gas flared and con-
ith the incoming breeze, the sunlight came
ımed wide into the open windows; but the
of that room took no note thereof. His
ıs taken with sonorous inhalations. He was
He had fallen into the deep slumber which
r succeeds excitement and an indulgence in
wine.

ı not to suppose that because matrimony came
ınhope's soliloquized enumeration of resources,
ı an alliance was of the quality of an un-
dernier ressort. Jane Duncan was an attract-
her father was a man of wealth, and Jem
might well be proud to win her.
ıd given him encouragement, and therefore it
marriage with her had suggested to him a
of his difficulties.
was not worthy of her. He was an idle, care-

the earliest subsequent opportunity, pressed his suit. That in response, very soon after, but against the protest of her father, who objected, Jane Duncan married this man—this improvident, who in his drunken perplexity had apostrophized her as his rescue from pressing embarrassments.

We shall learn more of the particulars, the conditions and the unfortunate consequences, hereafter.

CHAPTER II.

FIFTEEN YEARS HAVE PASSED.

"ISLAND NUMBER TEN."

THE boy has a winning face.

It is moulded in a cast of gentle contour, and its lines bespeak creditable lineage. His eyes are soft, but they evince character. There are "depths" in them as they look up with earnest inquiry into yours.

His dress is faded—ragged. It is not in character with the face. But so true, so ingenuous of heart is the lad, that no conscious embarrassment arises from this cause.

name is Conrad. He is fourteen years of age. will tell you that his mother lives in a huge tene- m bove. Jane Stanhope is her name.

ghts up, if you please, and the fourth door s you go down the hall." But with all his ness is lad would not dare answer inquiries r man who boards with his mother.

ly understands that this person is his he door on the left: the corner xt beyond Mrs. Stanhope's.

But there is clandestine reserve about this man. Mysterious looking people sometimes knock in a stealthy manner at his door and are admitted there. But the occupant is not "upon terms" with his co-tenants. *They* do not tap at his door or drop familiarly into his room. It is kept locked. No boy's curiosity has ever dared satisfaction as to its interior.

There is another door, once of communication, leading to this man's room from the inside of Mrs. Stanhope's modest apartment. But it appears now to be unused, permanently closed; for upon her side a heavy wardrobe has been placed against it.

I said that Conrad was his name. But among his playmates, "Connie" was the more familiar appellation. Perhaps they had caught this address from his mother. She always called him Connie.

This little boy held a baby, a vivacious brown-eyed little girl; a very beautiful child, in the second year of her age.

But Connie has been told, "She is only nine months old." He repeats this representation and you express surprise.

"'Her age?' Oh, yes sir: I'm quite sure. Mother says so. Don't you see the little white 'teefies' just through?"

The child looks up. Its eyes beam with healthful lustre. They sparkle up to you with a charming suasion.

Look down into them. What potential promises of love! Yes, you are a stranger, but they meet yours in placid smiling confidence. They wake in your heart an irresistible impulse. You covet the "little precious" and wish that *you had her, if but* for one moment, in *your arms; close against your* heart.

No, you have "never seen her before." Nevertheless a bond mysterious is established in a moment, and upon it your heart travels out to this beautiful creature with a genuine throb of affection.

Connie notes and approves your evident sentiment. His eyes have in them wise thoughts, and now they look up also, telling how proud and appreciative he is of his tender trust.

The lad sat thus, his merry little companion in his arms, the broad stone step his seat, just at the Furman street entrance to—

"ISLAND NUMBER TEN,"

so-called.

This name surprises you?

Well, it has a curious derivation. Certainly nothing about the structure, or its rambling intriguing intricacies, has, as the geographers define, any resemblance to "a body of land entirely surrounded by water."

Indeed, as we must tell the truth, very little water was ever found at this roadstead. Nevertheless such was the designation—"Island Number Ten." To be more explicit:

In the city of Brooklyn, and situated upon one of the frowzy corners of the intersection of Furman and State street stood a notorious building. At the period of our r , a hot summer month in the year eighteen hu and seventy —, this great pile of bricks, steaming stories into the air, had a the—police annals.

or was occupied as a liquor saloon, r was one of the lowest.

osely packed tenement apartments. these tenements was by a stairway,

opened out upon Furman street. This last
l thoroughfare is in the near vicinity of the docks,
tretches along the Brooklyn side of the East
opposite the southerly portion of New York

ing the day, Furman street was almost wholly
olized for trucking purposes. But at night the
r of the heavy wheels ceased, and until morning
again this roadway was abandoned, remaining
ind lonely; save occasionally as "whooped up"
riotous horde which often, for want of fighting
surged from the house into the more roomy

have described the side door to this barrack.
arge *front* door, and which, the better to distin-
it from the tenement co-entrance on Furman
, we will call the "rum door," was just around
rner of the building, and upon State street. This
ectly into the saloon, which occupied the ground-

"rum entrance" then, from State street, intro-
ces the explorer into an oblong apartment of
al length, considerable area, low ceiling and saw-
prinkled floor.
nediately to the left extends the bar. Opposite,
long the right, is ranged an irregular row of circu-
inking tables, around which, in various stages of
dation and confusion of arrangement, chairs are
red.
ween the bar and this disorderly row of tables
a tall circular stove, protected by a heavy iron
st, the whole firmly attached to the floor. For
are wild scenes here upon occasion; and a wise

forethought it is which thus provides against an overturn of fire.

The "fire" which was kept behind the bar, generally taxed the full managerial capacity of the proprietor, leaving no overplus of time for attention to combustibles otherwise.

Straining the vision through tobacco haze, away down between the bar and the drinking tables, and to the dim farther end of this smoke-darkened apartment, the eye finally discerns a door of exit, leading out from the lower end of the saloon.

In lengthened perspective effect, this door might be likened to the distant outlet of a tunnel. And the figure is appropriate, for this was not only a place of tunnels, but indeed in itself was one great tunnel, down which men and their souls swirled to deeper destruction.

This rear-perspective door led into the small square hall situated at the foot of the tenement stairs already described as opening out on Furman street, and where, as we have already related, Connie sat with the baby. Both doors therefore—this one at the rear of the saloon from the *inside*, and the larger Furman street *outside* entrance—alike introduced to the ascent of the stair-

ding up to the tenement regions above.

re was a sign in this hall. It hung over the

"t door. The letters were large, and one could

"FAMILY ENTRANCE."

it was intended as to the saloon's
y to the numerous domiciles above!
occupants understood it.
ading at the bottom of this steep pit-

hole staircase, whose many right-angled rickety turnings, extend far up, reaching finally the mazy musty attic, five stories above.

Following this angular ascent, as it winds up toward the garret, we shall find at each landing a narrow hall, which extends, its entire length, down through the centre of the building. On the relative sides of these gloomily lighted passages, story after story, opened the numerous and over-populated living rooms which filled this great house: this—"Island Number Ten."

The occupants carried no latch-keys. The outside door, long since parted from its hinges, has been thrown carelessly against the wall: accordingly the way is "always open." *Ergo:* the "Family Entrance," but a step to the left, is always in sight.

This condition is, no doubt, congruous, being in accord with the interests of the bar near by; and withal, so invitingly significant to its boozy patrons throughout the house, as to suggest the homely invitation of the "latch string," which in phrase of old was said to be "always out."

Howbeit, as appertaining to this "always open" passage, there were other conditions of supplemental importance, likewise very convenient: at least so a professional slugger slily suggested to a companion, shutting one eye meantime to help along his meaning.

But these latter appurtenances were of a character wholly contradictory to the figure of the hospitable latch string. Should the reader desire explanation concerning them, he has only to read on.

Furman, being a river street, and at night dark and unfrequented, the "rear" opportunity thus afforded for the disposition of a customer, too drunk for further traffic at the bar, was of a nature not to be "hic-

coughed" at. Neither might one depreciate conveniences further presented in this dismal, deserted locality, whereby, in the uninterrupted quiet of the "small" hours, convivial whiskey companions and bunco-confidence-steerers, could institute a fearless digital investigation into the pocket finances of the fuddled fool, just summarily ejected; possibly, with a view to the prevention of that cruelty to his family which might result, should he get away with means still left for further inebriation at some other hell-hole!

Ah, what a capital thing is a "Family Entrance," which can to so good purpose be utilized also as a summary kick-out! How much are our urban homes indebted to the disinterested whiskey-venders, the flexile monte-manipulators of this city of Brooklyn, for so thoughtful and ingenious an appurtenance!

What wonder, where so many advantages were "pooled in one boodle," that there should be found an eager appreciative crew, anxious to participate in the plunder!

Thus it was: for into this building had been drawn a community of lepidoted hesperiidae, abandoned, dissolute, and vicious to the last degree.

The location, near the docks and remote from frequented ways, favored the unruly character of the place, as well as encouraged the custom it was calcu- to accommodate.

the circumstances then, we may readily com- how it came familiarly to be spoken of by ce as a "hot hole." But as to its other name. So rt became the embroilments, the ne general "crookedness" of the angerous the precinct, that was suggested as a facetiously

contrived appellation, in significant allusion, and by way perhaps of sardonic parallelism, to a theatre of desperately contested conflict then in progress upon the Mississippi river, during the late war; but where bombs and powder, rather than lead slugs and rum, constituted the more respectable disabling agencies.

By a deceptive circumventive fiction, contrived by the State, this remarkable place was legally denominated a—"Hotel."

No doubt many travelers, whiskey laden, had there found rest; some of them a retirement of a permanent character.

Was it a hotel or inn as respects that accommodation to travelers which these names imply? The words,

"HOTEL FURMAN"

certainly appeared, boldly delineated upon the transom light over the main entrance.

Yes: this very dangerous "Trap for the Unwary," was a duly constituted "Hotel," under the following law:

> "License shall not be granted to any person to sell "strong and spirituous liquors and wines to be "drank on the premises of the person licensed, "unless such person *proposes to keep an* INN, "TAVERN or HOTEL, nor unless the Commis- "sioners are satisfied that the applicant is of good "moral character, that he has sufficient ability to "keep an INN, TAVERN or HOTEL, and the nec- "essary accommodations to entertain travelers, "and that an INN, TAVERN or HOTEL, is RE- "QUIRED FOR THE ACTUAL ACCOMMODA- "TION of TRAVELERS, at the place where "such applicant resides or proposes to keep the "same;
>
> * * * * * *

"and every keeper of an INN, TAVERN or HO-
"TEL in the cities of this State shall keep at
"least THREE SPARE BEDS and the necessary
"bedding, for the accommodation of travelers.
"For every neglect or default, etc., etc."

Revised Statutes of New York: Vol. II, Chap. XX, Title IX, Sections 12 and 14.

Granted now, that the prevailing moral sentiment is, "Hotels are proper and necessary: rum-holes are improper and unnecessary;" what through practice and by inference, is the permissible interpretation of such a statute?

This: A man *may* keep a hotel with a sink-hole attached; but no man shall keep a sink-hole, without a hotel attached. Result: Nonsense and non-compliance. The first referring to the law, and the last to the governed(?).

However, thus, by statute, does the great State of New York provide accommodation, overwhelming hotel(!) accommodation, for all within her borders; since statisticians tell us that, by this ghastly pleasantry, the "Hotels" average ONE TO EVERY TWENTY-THREE FAMILIES.

Simple little Connie: you are not up to the cleverness of such legislation! We hope that you will not be, when you get to be an assemblyman at Albany.

* * * * * *

A soft hand crept up and nestled cosily in Connie's neck. It was a warm place for a baby hand, albeit the neck had a ragged covering.

A child's movement arrested Connie's reflections. They had been of the "brown study" order. His eyes rested with a tender regard. "Precious little darling!"

he murmured to the baby; yet half absent from himself and dreamily. Then quite alert once more, and squaring the child before him, the better to point a more particular address,

"Do you know, my sweetheart, what's in the bills for you?"

Evidently baby did not; for notwithstanding her wise expression, she appeared to look inquiringly, as asking more particular specification. Connie proceeded:

"You're to be in the 'perfessional' way."

Baby smiled in dimples.

"Yes: them dimples means money for—" He broke off suddenly, as with an apprehension of possible danger.

After looking about carefully, relieved apparently from any immediate confirmation of his fears, he resumed once more to the baby,

"Yes, miss;" and now in a whisper, bending to bring his mouth close to little one's ear, "I'm awful sorry to tell you of it, but every one of them sweet looks of your'n will 'fetch' it, over the soft ones."

Judging from the apprehensive regard, the look of hesitating admiration which accompanied this, one would have said that Connie entertained a distrustful but nevertheless an admiring appreciation of baby's diabolical depths of dissimulation.

But on second thought, discarding such absurdities, he came, doubtfully, reflectively, and somewhat sorrowfully, back to enumerative specification.

"'He' says you won't do just yet. It'll take a l-o-n-g time. Too many little cushions—here, and—here;" pinching softly the baby's cheeks, arms and chubby knees, and fondly cuddling her close. Then dropping his playful address, he added, mournfully,

"Got to be put in trainin'. Mind, it isn't me as does

it." This concluding disclaimer hastily; for the baby at this moment appeared to regard him reproachfully.

Suddenly, as moved with unusual feeling, he clasped the child yet closer: then in subdued tone, but intensely, his cheek pressed hard to her soft, fragrant, down-covered head,

"But *I'm* the lad as'll be your friend; never fear; you can put it there, my little princess;" lifting his head and proffering his hand; "and don't you forget it."

Connie, however, so far forgot himself as to expect the baby to clasp hands with him in her acceptance of so doughty a champion. But the little innocent received his pledge of constancy in her own baby way. With pretty uncertainty of motion she patted his outstretched hand, and smiled contentedly up into his earnest face.

The child was strong, beautifully formed, with each limb handsomely swelling in hardened royal health. The season was Summer, and her feet and limbs were almost without covering. They were such as provoke a fond mother to playful loving caresses.

And this little one had elsewhere a mother, who loved her oh so fondly! Often and often had that mother ed those rosy knees. She had loved to watch her sleeping, bending the while over the cradle and emulously in the sweet realization of this ... ieu possession; her first born precious baby dar-

whispered in that mother's ear, "What gency shall interpose, and your little you?" Such thought would have er heart with suffocation. At the would have caught her baby to

her breast; her startled eyes and difficult breath would have testified her horror at even the whispered possibility of so dreadful a foreboding.

But alas! Thus indeed had it exactly come to pass. And not very long ago, his own heart a load within his breast, this same baby's grandfather had watched with deepest anxiety over this mother, his daughter, not long since a widow, almost in despair of controlling the terrible crisis of her grief and bereavement.

"Will she die?" So it had been asked.

In death forever indeed would be hidden her piteous woe!

"Or will life come back to her?"

Then must she take it again wearily, sobbingly, despairingly; for now hath gone from it a bright glad sunshine. In its place will remain the dreadful cloud of a wearing, a sickening uncertainty. Will this ever determine?

* * * * * *

But the baby realized nothing of all this; and now it raised its smiling eyes to the boy's face as he vehemently pronounced his voluntary covenant. Soft-brown, thoughtful, and intelligent they were. Those eyes seemed to look love, though never a word did the baby speak.

"No," the lad went on with suppressed vengefulness, "if I had the sand and the muscle, I'd——"

Connie interrupted and illustrated at this point. With energy and affected show of pugilistic science, he shot out his small right fist in several quick passes at an imaginary enemy.

This ragged urchin was a little fellow of stout grit, withal, gentle and loving. The dual capacity affirmed at this moment by his attitude, aptly prefigured

a double phase of his future. While one arm declared war, the other exercised protection. One circled the baby with affectionate solicitude, the other menaced the threatened danger. Dear Connie! The tableau foreshadowed a terrible struggle, which, during a critical period following, was attendant upon his voluntary championship. While it brought much to endure, it nevertheless compensated in much to love.

Connie's pugilistic demonstration pleased his little charge, who appropriated it as a display for her delectation. In glee she crowed and coaxed to be raised on her chubby legs.

Steadying the pretty totterer, whose feet now rested uncertainly upon his knees, the boy resumed with a bent, lowering brow, as apostrophizing some absent object of detestation.

"No; if I had my will on you, I'd fix a surprise for your sneezer, as would make you ramble and beller, without any smeller, forever and ever."

Connie thought this very strong. Then, too, the unpremeditated rythmical structure of the impromtu anathema, pleased him much. He chuckled in a mental contemplation of his enemy, wandering about and bellowing, without the adjunct of a nasal appendage.

The baby joined gleefully in the chuckle.

It was in the full tide of the merriment which sucled, and while Connie was dancing the child up and , that the individual apostrophized came sharply n the scene.

approached from State street, coming around the rner f the front door of the saloon, with a soft

of the lad and his little com- worn a satisfied look. Perhaps he

was cogitating with inward gratulation upon the successful consummation of a recent villainy.

He was a stout man: not very tall.

Age—about forty-six.

Of the sanguine-bilious temperament. Enough of the sanguine to account for his love of ease; and enough of the bilious to lend devilish energy to the accomplishment of wicked purposes.

He was well dressed. Not showily, but after a quiet fashion.

His face, without beard, was puffed, as though from dropsical tendency. Easy living and abundant fare might also have had an influence.

His eyes—a whity-blue.

Complexion—a chalky bloodless pallor.

Head—large.

Hair—profuse, and light in color.

In conclusion, the nose was of a gross, puffy spissitude, and a ripe-strawberry similitude. This, coupled with its startling contrast to the colorless face, made it a feature which at once arrested and fixed attention. No doubt this nasal characteristic accounted for the mental direction of Connie's vengeful invective.

Withal he was a man of great physical strength. But this was an evanescent ability. After its fitful exercise the effort left him breathless and exhausted.

The passional in his nature corresponded. Upon slight provocation, rage like a torrid simoon would dominate every faculty, whirling the man beyond himself, and for the moment rendering him maniacal.

Looking into his face, a child would have avoided the man. Notwithstanding there was a magnetism about him; but aggressive rather than sympathetic; and of a quality to make a woman shudder, striving to avoid its

power, though it should for the time draw her within the entanglement of evil devices.

He had no conscience.

Appreciation of moral turpitude—none.

Regard for the rights of others—none.

He was selfish to the degree which leaves all rights, all duties, all obligations, wholly deferred to personal preference; wholly subservient to the whim of careless, vicious, individual inclination.

Couple with this, a mediocre education; a tolerable command of language in speaking, but which halted and jangled somewhat when he sought to express thought in written form, and we have the leading characteristics of the man who came thus suddenly upon Connie.

Recognizing the pair in a moment, he stooped. His face flushed as with rising anger mingled with some secret apprehension. He glanced quickly, adroitly, about him; up and down the street; his eyes concluding the survey by a rapid sweep, keen and covert, up and along the front of the great building beside him, the "Island Number Ten." Then he came close to the trembling lad.

The baby smiled up to him. He was dead to its blandishments.

Planting one foot on the lower stone riser and stooping over the shrinking boy, advancing his face and glaring savagely into his half-averted eyes, he exclaimed under his breath,

"What in h——"

Then, becoming suddenly conscious of the possibility of observation, he left unfinished the profane exclamation, and substituted a command, swelling every moment more and more with rage suppressed.

"Get in, you infernal whelp!"

Connie obeyed with great precipitation.

Following through the doorway, and into the well-hole hall, he demanded hotly,

"How long have you had that child exposed to the whole tattling neighborhood?"

Connie paused not to give answer. He sprang with his precious burden up the stairs.

This movement, as a spark to powder, touched the magazine of his wrath; and with vicious fury, in hot pursuit, the last restraint gone, the man leaped after.

Connie was fleet of foot; but with his burden, no match, in this rage-rush of his impetuous pursuer.

The baby crowed and screamed with delight. The race to her was a grand frolic.

The first landing was gained. Then a partial ascent of the second flight, when Connie felt a grasp, quick, strong, fixed into the clothing covering his shoulder.

In an instant he was jerked down and back into the passage upon the second floor.

In his anxiety for the baby's safety the boy made no demonstration of personal defence. His heartless pursuer, now clenching him with both hands, and simultaneously impelling the cowardly assault with the weight of his body, crushed the lad in a moment to the floor. There he grappled his throat, and with one doubled knee cruelly planted, he threw the whole gross burden of his heavy body vengefully upon the boy's breast.

A blackness came over Connie's eyes; he felt them push outward; he could not articulate; he could only gasp.

As a last appeal, a forlorn hope, he extended aloft the baby toward the face of his infuriated assailant. True to his loving instincts the lad had held fast to the little one, stretching his arms to hold her as far as possible from danger.

YOU HAD THAT CHILD EXPOSED TO THE TATTLING NEIGHBORHOOD?" (Page 34.)

Her interposition now saved him. This tigerish treatment of her little friend frightened baby, and she set up a piteous cry. The diversion served a rescue.

Loosing now his grasp of Connie's throat and clutching the child hastily, the angry man arose. He rapidly ascended two more flights; passed quickly along the fourth floor hall to a point near the further extremity, and disappeared within a door which seemed to open of itself to receive him.

He roughly flung the terrified child to a woman who stood with lowering face within; then, disembarrassed, threw himself heavily into a large arm-chair standing near; one of the deep-seated thick-cushioned kind, commonly called a "sick-chair."

"I saw you," she began; though barely in a whisper, but severely; "I saw—I watched you over the balusters." Then with deeper passion, "You are a brute!"

The man's anger and rapid ascent had winded and weakened him. She understood that for the moment he was at a disadvantage. She went on intensely;

"May God note it. How inhuman and cowardly was it to crush the boy to the floor in that cruel manner! Some time he may attempt revenge upon you. He will know too how to go about it. If he don't I can give him a hint. Have a care. He is my son. Don't think that I shall always look on and not fight for him."

This championship of her child was a daring venture his woman. It was only made possible just then, a man's utter inability, to interrupt or reply. But reascendency was not long delayed.

"I'd cut his tattling throat for him then!" he plied, partially recovering his voice: "and yours " he added, gutterally, after a pause, still strug- full breath.

"What does the cub mean," he went on in savage argument, "by sitting in broad day, down-stairs on the outside stoop, with that child in full sight of the whole street? Do you think I'm going to allow such a fool's risk and say nothing? Damn him!"

She gave an involuntary start at his concluding imprecation. It had indeed been uttered vehemently. But she withheld any reply. He continued retrospectively,

"Yes, he is your son; so you say. I wish he was in hell though! If he keeps on he'll get the rest of us there, sure; or some place else just about as comfortable."

All this was ejaculated with suppressed hissing utterance, as though neighbors might overhear too much.

Once during this brutal tirade had the woman, starting forward in her chair, flashed upon him a desperate look, half-opening her lips as though to interrupt in reply. But she conquered the impulse, seeming, after that, to grow unconscious of his violent words, even of his presence; as though accustomed to such outbreaks. She was traveling in meditation further and further from him.

In this mood she sat at the conclusion of his denunciations; as with an air of half-forgetfulness, but which gradually changed into thoughtful contrite regard of the baby.

This contemplation was tender, but it was not one of gentle peace of mind. Her face showed a conscious trouble. It wore the habit of an expression which betokened secret forebodings. However, motherly instincts were active, and she mechanically soothed the terrified child until its sobs hushed, or were only remembered in fitful dream starts. Its pretty brown eyes had closed in slumber.

Finally she asked, in allusion to her charge, her regard still bent upon the little one,

"What are you going to do with it?"

She would not look his way; she looked only at the baby. She remembered its loving confidences so lately bestowed; they had touched and claimed her. Then, too, she would avoid the influence of the cruel eyes, fixed, she knew, upon her.

"Listen now;" he answered, his upper lip raised sneeringly, his manner coarsely dictatorial: "First, I'm going to starve it down. Do you know what that means? You know you do. Why do you ask me 'What am I going to do with it?' Didn't you help carry out the plan?"

"Yes;" in reply; "but I'm sorry for my part of it. I did it only to please you."

"Well," he sniffed, without any answering tone of appreciative acknowledgment, "go on pleasing me. You know what I want. But first of all," with the air of one laying down the law, "she's not to leave these rooms. You can use mine to hide her in when callers come. But mind you, drug her well when you put her there; for I won't be bothered by squalling. I might cut its throat."

The woman started, at the same time regarding him with suspicious scrutiny. She knew him capable even of suc[illegible] thing, could it be done with impunity. [illegible] a murderous disposal of the infant been [illegible]ad a nature blunted and hardened enough to [illegible]le, "If safely done, 'twere well done."

[illegible]rmed;" he went on, with hideous [illegible]ess, intentionally misinterpreting her startled [illegible]: "I'd fix it *on you*. Don't be alarmed—for me, [illegible]r." The "my dear" with sardonic venom,

long drawn out, as though he took great satisfaction in this bestowal of irony. "You wouldn't have occasion to go into mourning for—me."

Continuing then with reference to the child:

"She's to have no light, and just enough air to keep her alive. The closet and plenty of paregoric will do the business."

Then with mock solicitude and a grin at his own cruel witticism, he added,

"The poor little blink-a-wink is sick. It must have all the medicine 'e 'ittle pinky' wants."

The woman sat very still. Her heart beat fast. A film of tears, which she took good care he should not note, clouded her eyes. His heartless jocularity ended, she answered only by pressing the child closer to her breast.

But there was a wicked significance in all that he had said; and continuing once more,

"She's to have just milk enough to keep her along, and lots of vinegar to work her down."

He spoke as though he highly approved this prescriptive diet, for—another.

"I don't want her to suffer outright, but," with a vindictive emphasis, as though the child's chubby proportions affronted him, "she's too—full—fed—now, for *our* purposes;" and he craned his body forward, pointing each of the last concluding words with emphatic nods of disapproval toward the offending infant.

"'Our purposes'"; spoke the woman, quoting in a tone of shuddering disclaimer. "Had I any independent choice in this matter? I tell you that it was not with my willing approval that the baby found her way here. *Why, we don't* even know to whom she

belongs! Haven't we been making enough without her? But," with deprecating mien, "you seem to want——"

"Yes," he interrupted, cutting her off, mocking her voice with his coarse falsetto, and at the same time anticipating what he knew she was about to say, "I do want *to make more;* and you'll help me to do it; or," bringing his fist heavily down upon the arm of his chair, "I'll—help—myself—to an account from *you.* I've got a double plan in this business."

What he meant by the last sentence of his heartless harangue may have been obscure; but the menacing bearing exhibited toward his companion left no doubt as to the quality of his vengeance, contingent upon any interruption by her, of his purpose respecting the brown-eyed little baby.

CHAPTER III.

WHO WAS THIS WOMAN?

"Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shiv'ring female lies;
She, once perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distrest:
Her modest looks, the cottage might adorn,
veet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
ow lost to all; her friends, her virtue fled;
* * * * *
With heavy heart deplores the luckless hour."
Goldsmith's "Deserted Village."

e reader will be pained to learn that Jane Stanhope, he tool and accomplice of the unlicensed outlaw

nt to the date of this story, "Island Number
fletorship. The motley brood inhabiting it was
ed and repaired; and now a respectable class
to find homes on its floors.

whose control over her was shown in the last chapter, is the misguided woman who, fifteen years ago, married Jem Stanhope. She is the only daughter of Theodore Duncan, one of New York's wealthiest merchants. Strange verity that such should be her incongruous relations!

What untoward accidents of circumstance have intervened to cause this woman, once allied by kindred to respectability and wealth, to present herself now as the subjected chattel of a wretch, whose abuse of her own son she dares resent but haltingly?

Alas! Many genuinely lovable and truly womanly natures there are, who, by impulse and natural inclination are constant and loyal to honor and honorable ties; but who, in some unguarded, unfortunate complexity of situation, have sacrificed all for an empty husk!

Perhaps it was unwittingly and through want of knowledge, possibly wittingly, but through one moment's careless unthought of the dreadful consequences, that these misguided ones overstepped the danger line. Insidiously they were cajoled, deceived; their loving trust played upon, abused, and then——betrayed.

This woman's genius and education; her wit, coupled with her captivating brunette beauty; these once established her as the principal attraction in the social circle wherein she moved. No limitation in money was stipulated for her expenditures. Necessities and fancies alike found careless and lavish allowance.

Her parents believed that they loved her; they certainly were proud of her. But their's was a love, not founded in any depth of parental solicitude, and the pride was rather the quality of vanity; else perhaps *they would have better done* their duty by her

In health, she was rosy and strong.

In stature, of medium height and symmetrical.

In grace of motion, a swaying rythm.

Her black eyes sparkled; while her ready, witty discourse claimed full part with admiring disputants in the merry war of social encounter.

She sang well: she played well: she danced well: and well she loved t[illegible]se diversions, all.

Alas! with all her artistic accomplishments, pretty graces and gentle intuitions, she was weak in her judgment of men. Like many another of her maiden drawing-room companions, she estimated a masculine associate solely from a society standpoint. She was not taught to ask, "What is also the breadth of his promised ability, when substantial accomplishment in the world's battle shall become the paramount concern?"

Her parents, primarily, were responsible for this. With her native good sense and innate intelligence, she would have appreciated and profited by a knowledge of true conditions. But in this behalf she was never enlightened by her father or mother.

How much easier to treat her as a joyful, merry playfellow, and trust to hopeful wishes concerning her future!

With her inquisitive brightness, it would have been inviting to a perplexing school of tuition, had the curtain of the real world about her been lifted, in a duti[illegible] attempt to show her its dangers: its sad mistakes, [illegible] lessons to be drawn therefrom.

[illegible] eff[illegible]t, her parents said: "We will rear her [illegible]. We cannot deny that some rude future, demolish the conservatory, precipitated into a sand storm: but we not occur. If it does—(with a sigh) let us borrow trouble before it comes."

And thus she continued to live, believing in superficialities; and, like a child unwarned, she sported along the frightful caving edge of dangerous liabilities.

The sequel!

She contracted the engagement of marriage, heretofore referred to, with "Jem" Stanhope.

Her father was greatly annoyed. First, in a tardy gentle way, he discouraged; afterwards he openly and warmly opposed it. Finally he flatly forbid it.

Too late now to school her!

> The bit deferred,
> Is a risk incurred.

She would not listen to what her friends urged as "reason." When had *she* ever been "reasoned" with! Unreasoning, unintelligent pride and an indulged wilfulness, prompted girlish defiance.

She was secretly married.

But the reconciliation and forgiveness anticipated in this "Fool's Romance," was not at the finis of the chapter. There was nothing in the man of Jane's choice to promote it. He was shallow, vainglorious, full-dressed and empty-headed. He married the girl, anticipating with her hand afterwards, the money which was to relieve him from financial embarrassments.

The young wife's mother died very soon after the disclosure of this unfortunate alliance. But her decease was not connected with it as a result. Indiscreet exposure at a ball, followed by pneumonia, caused her death.

Then the father, impelled in a measure by sorrow on account of the loss *of his wife*; influenced perhaps also *by angry disappointment*, because of the mésalliance

of his daughter; careless too of other responsibilities, of other ties, and preparatory to an aimless wandering abroad, arranged soon after to place his business in charge of his two sons.

These young men had escaped the butterfly maturation which had environed their sister. They had served a rigorous and faithful apprenticeship in their father's counting-room, attaining finally to the full competency of independent management.

The father's transfer being adjusted, he sailed in the first steamer for Europe.

Disappointed now in his money expectations, the shallow-guaged husband of the misguided daughter—now too a mother—after completing his dissipation of the small sum and the limited credit remaining at his command, heartlessly deserted his young wife and her infant child.

Thereupon the elder brother of the misguided woman sought her out and urged her to return home. But she avoided a direct answer, asking that, for a time, she be left in seclusion.

Now she had never truly loved and respected, in the sweet trustfulness of wifely devotion, the craven fellow who had just abandoned her. She had discovered his inferiority. She realized the painful disparity between them. Her eyes had been opened to the petty diminutiveness of the man.

these realities urged themselves upon her, she
to the humiliating knowledge of the great mis-
had made. Then had transpired her mother's
and she, her only daughter, absent and un-
These things unbalanced her. Next had
her father's abrupt departure, without one
; *and* finally her husband's desertion, with

all its attendant mortifications and embarrassing results. These cumulative catastrophes made her desperate. She became like a bewildered hunted deer, unwarily surprised, mortally stricken, and having but one impulse; a desire to veil her sorrows in seclusion.

It was in such a condition, seemingly fate-impelled, that, avoiding the solicitude of her brothers, she took a second unfortunate step. She stole away without their knowledge, establishing herself temporarily at a small hotel in a country town, a few miles distant from New York. Her baby was then four months old.

Here she met a man, who, perhaps, was introduced; more likely who introduced himself, as "Colonel" Burle. We saw him, once upon a time, at the faro table.

The Colonel had "an office on Wall Street:" *so he said.*

He was, for a few days, temporarily stopping at this hotel; where (he was "delighted to be informed") Mrs. Stanhope was domiciled.

He secured a seat at her table in the dining-room.

Soon he developed an inclination to prolong conversations with her at meals.

But it is not our purpose to trace the course of this man's insidious approach. We supplement to what already is known of him that he was an adept in the oily, wily ways of the world; that he was conversant with its crooked schemes; that he was familiar with the very worst of its evading subterfuges.

Mrs. Stanhope suspected no danger. She had never been educated to any caution with men. Invitations to ride with him were accepted.

She *did wrong in this.* Going with a stranger at *any time, but especially at that* time, and under the

peculiar circumstances of her position, was an indiscretion which any careful mother would have advised against. However, though a married woman, indeed a mother herself, no mother's gentle tuition had for her anticipated the discreet course under the circumstances. Her prior training had not been of such character as to prompt to the right or shield in this emergency now. She had been allowed her own way: and she had been encouraged, furthermore, to believe that her own way was right. Now, she was lonely and dejected: riding was a pleasure; therefore she rode when opportunity offered, without considering or giving thought to attendant objectionable conditions. There was no element of regard, ordinary or particular, for the "Colonel", involved; and she sat by his side, realizing impropriety no more than would a lady thus attended by her coachman.

Moreover the "Colonel" possessed a knowledge of *the world* and of *a* world which was new to her. He had an ingenious way of narrating incidents; and the narrations concerned things, to her, entirely novel. She soon found herself talking familiarly with him.

After the first natural reserve toward a new acquaintance had so far worn away as to make it possible for him to attempt it, he adroitly led her to talk of herself. She fell into the trap.

* * * * * *

one glance but reveal the depth of the descent,
the threatened cully recoil with alarm?
[illegible], by a step-by-step *per clivum descendere*, the
vel is reached ere the unwary loiterer is aware.

* * * * * *

followed another, until, thus unsw

ingly led on, she one day—very much to her own surprise afterwards—related to him the unpleasant circumstances of her disastrous marriage. Could any thing have been more incautious?

What next?

Becoming straitened in means, and wishing for awhile yet to conceal her retreat from her brothers, she unsuspectingly accepted the money he tendered; indeed, understanding nothing about the import of such an obligation, or of the compromising nature of such a dependence.

"My brothers will return it to you very shortly," she said with simplicity. The "Colonel" of course acquiesced.

She admitted him thus, by imperceptible stages, more and more into her confidence; and at last, in a moment most evil of all, she consented to accompany him to a large town, "only a few miles away, madam," whither he was going—"on business"; so he said to her. He should "*return the same day*," he further emphasized. "The air and the change" would "do her good."

All this in a courteous off-hand of-course way; but withal, an air of solicitous sympathetic insistance.

"Oh, yes;" she should "take the baby, of course;" and——"no doubt this little jaunt will benefit and please the little fellow quite as much as it will ourselves. Then what earthly objection can there be in thus going;" and he spread himself before her, opening his palms in lordly dignified disclaimer of any possible impropriety.

"It would compromise her—perhaps?"

She had *added the "perhaps"* in hasty though timid *questioning qualification.* Evidently she wanted to

go; hesitated to commit herself thus wholly to his care; yet knew of no reason why she should distrust him. The "Colonel" proceeded to remove any lingering uncertainty.

"Madam," (with just a hint in his air of injured feelings) "I do assure you, my name, my social standing, my business relations; they are all in the nature, in your behalf, of a safe conduct. Why—!" and the "Colonel" swelled with apparent depreciatory consternation at the thought of any injury or wrong resulting, and allowed her to finish the interjectional aspirate to suit herself. Any thought of impropriety certainly shocked *him* beyond the power of further expression.

She felt that she might have done him discourteous injustice, and thereupon hastened to accept his invitation.

Would she have made such a mistake had her parents, aforetime, lifted the curtain and shown this defenceless child some of the common pitfalls which beset the path of young girls? They could at least have shown her enough to have possessed her with a hint of the danger that the great outside world hides, when young women essay to go abroad into its prickly windings unattended, unprotected.

Talk about shocking the modesty of a young girl! Prate about exposure of the delicate petals of a flower! This is not such pretense, my easy friend who art also a parent, as will justify you before God, when He beholds that child stumbling, absolutely unwarned, upon the threshold of deadly danger.

Fatal conclusion for Jane Stanhope!

cepted the invitation, expecting, of course, to
same day.

The journey was a short one. After arriving at their destination he came to her in the parlor of the hotel where the registry had been made for dinner, and boldly announced that he had entered their names as —"Husband and Wife!"

She recoiled, astonished. Was this some horrid pleasantry? The very audacity of the manœuvre fairly stunned her. Could he mean her harm? Her eyes sought his in a troubled inquiry.

The evil whirlpool of her destiny was bearing this woman nearer—nearer its overmastering centre. The fraudulent "Colonel" was withdrawing his mask, and the remorseless hound of evil fate, now close on the unfortunate victim, startled her for the first time into a bewildered sense of threatened danger.

She tottered to her feet. Should she cry out? Should she arouse the house and denounce this man as having intention to ruin her?

It was the last shallow rooted rush of possible succor. Though it clung, in sickly growth, along the dizzy crumbling brink of the depth below, yet would it have saved her.

She stood, with a fainting tottering powerlessness, looking at him in dazed incredulity.

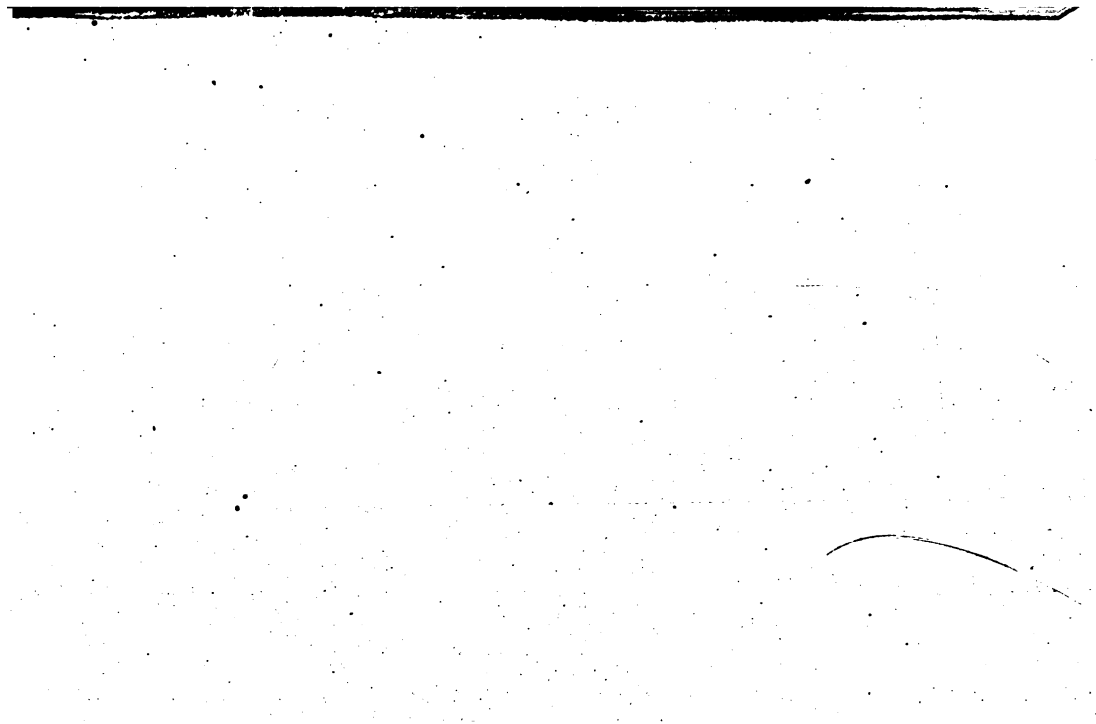
This interval of nerveless inaction marked her last chance.

He repeated his announcement: a breath-taking menace was in the tone: a blow in every word. He approached her.

She retreated backwards; one cold unsteady hand clutched into her skirts and supporting the child, the other raised before her *face.*

She was voiceless; held as in some dreadful night-*mare: agonizing to cry out,* but unable to utter a sound.

!VAL OF NERVELESS INACTION MARKED HER LAST CHANCE. (Page 48.)



He gave her no more time. Not another moment to think or plan an escape. A chambermaid coming in at this juncture, he hastily handed to her a numbered key, at the same time commanding loudly, affectedly, "Show 'my wife' to her room. She is tired out. The journey has exhausted her."

The victim had sunk upon a sofa. So hard had she been struck, and so unexpectedly, that her resources, her faculties, they were paralyzed. She did not hear or understand the command to the attendant. Conscious note of the babe even forsook her, and the little one slid from her lap to the floor.

The child began to cry, and the maid, key in hand, immediately coming forward, gently lifted the little fellow from his mother's feet, and in obedience to the order just received, moved toward the door leading into the hall.

The mother did not realize that her baby was being taken from her until she partially awoke from her stupor; then she perceived the girl, carrying the child, passing through the door and disappearing from the room.

Springing up immediately, but with such conscious motive only as was born of a mother's solicitude, she hastily pursued.

The man came closely after.

The prey of the panther was almost within reach of his deadly rush.

He followed; through the hall; to the open entrance of the room into which the innocent baby decoy had been carried; and whither the mother, following after to reclaim her child, had been drawn. He stood a few moments upon the outside. He waited until the attendant, passing out, was in the act of closing the door.

Then he interposed:
He grasped the knob:
He entered:
The door closed behind him.

* * * * * *

She was lost.

CHAPTER IV.

AND WHO WAS THIS MAN?

Allegorically, a prickly and bitter shuck: yet must we dispose of it before we can intelligently get at the kernel of this narrative.

CLUFF BURLE was born in the County of O———, in the State of New York. Both his father and mother died while he was young, and thereafter he was taken in charge by his grandfather, Jonathan Hildred; a vigorous man, then in his fifty-seventh year.

This gentleman was a wealthy silk-goods manufacturer. He spared no pains in procuring for the boy every advantage that money could command. The lad was provided with the best instructors; sent to the best preparatory schools. He made barely mediocre progress.

Not being sufficiently advanced before, it was not until he was twenty-five years of age, that he was admitted into Union college as a freshman.

After passing thus from the immediate control of his grandfather, he fell, with little restraint, under influences and into ways not to his advantage.

Some *said that he was only* following out his natural *predilections. Others, that* he had too much pocket

money. Perhaps both criticisms touched somewhat upon the truth of the matter.

His grandfather allowed him one hundred dollars each month. It was stipulated by the kind Mr. Hildred that, within this limit he should confine his living expenses. But when a young man, in addition to current living expenses, has large billiard, livery, and other kindred and sundry accounts to meet, a monthly allowance of *one hundred dollars* melts rapidly away.

When, too, under the pressure of such a situation, a young man draws upon his ingenuity to fabricate items of expenditure, in order thereby to deceive an indulgent guardian, then his *moral sensibilities* also ——"melt rapidly away."

It soon came to pass that young Burle's "Charitable (!) " disbursements, his "Expenditures for books (?)" and, in short, his alleged outlays for the dozen-and-one innocent but customary pastimes of lads in college, were made to aggregate large amounts. This augmentation was his method of false accounting.

The good man opened his kindly eyes and remarked that he "didn't have any idea how expensive college life was;" and the monthly allowance was increased to one hundred and *fifty* dollars.

Thus the guardian unwittingly granted to his grandson a premium on dishonesty. He admitted it in a sorrowful reflective "aside," when, two years afterwards, he found the key to Cluff's bookkeeping.

"I never would have thought it of him!" he ruminated, upon making the discovery.

This meditative retrospect occurred late one evening after Mr. Hildred had returned from Schenectady, whither he had been upon an errand to persuade a *readmission for* Cluff after expulsion in his sophomore

year. He had locked himself into his handsome office; and there he sat, dubiously regarding a file of "doctored" accounts which Cluff, from month to month, had sent him.

"I ought," he was saying to himself, "in some way to have called a checkmate on the devil in this business. Perhaps, by some manœuvre, I might have impressed a lasting and beneficial lesson on his pupil."

The good gentleman would have been even more surprised, could he have known how long this evil "Familiar" had been intimate with his grandson.

But we are anticipating, somewhat, the order of events. Let us take up the narrative in its regular course of incident, commencing at Cluff's freshman year.

Under the evading expedients suggested by this maleficent genius, too often now at his elbow, Cluff managed to get through the first year, and fraudulently to pass his freshman examinations.

Such methods are familiar to some in college. At least they are willingly suggested by Cluff's devil to any who evince a disposition to avail of them. They consist in surreptitious memorandum slips, wristband or cuff notes in pencil, "ponies," and the like.

Ah, boys! you cheat yourselves by such avoidance. As though your fathers, having given money for you to buy good wheat, find afterwards that you have elected to take chaff instead: because in thoughtless foolishness you have reasoned, "It is lighter to carry." You cannot go far, as you pass abroad into the world's market, without bitterly regretting the folly of such imaginary "short cuts" to excellence. You can never impose your *chaff upon the* community for the genuine *article.*

When Cluff went home to spend his sophomore vacation he was in his twenty-sixth year. At this time he met and paid considerable attention to a young girl named Maggie Fitzgerald.

Maggie was a bright attractive brunette of eighteen, and estimable in character. But the circle in which she moved was quite apart from the one which described itself around Jonathan Hildred's hearth. Nevertheless, among her own, she was justly reputed a pure and a true girl. Her father was a harness-maker.

Very little at that time however came of this acquaintance; and Cluff, after spending his term of recreation, returned to the college at Schenectady.

Sophomores are said to be "wise fools." They certainly do many foolish things which they profoundly imagine to be *wise*, but which are more often regarded by other people—*other*wise.

Cluff was not an exception; and persisting in the unwisdom of his ways, he was, after several precautionary warnings, summarily expelled.

He returned to O——— County in defiant mood, and with the thought, "If grandfather don't like it, he can 'lump' it."

Possibly he may have given mental utterance to this rude vulgarism as a declaration of war. But if so, there was no bellicose response. His grandfather was
sorry, and very kind. He thought much, but for
sent he said very little.
d "formed plans" for his grandson: plans
ted the handling of important merchan-
s. Guaged however by young Cluff's
of the recent past, the kind gentleman
fully to hesitate in his hopes respecting

the young man's prospective fitness for he contemplated trust.

But he would not yet relinquish faith in him. He proposed, now, a careful preliminary training in the counting-rooms of the mills, and under his own tuition.

Cluff was not ardently disposed, but he acquiesced. Therefore, as a beginning, he was preparatively installed in a routine of introductory commercial duties, under the care of the general manager at the factory.

Mr. Hildred's plan was to familiarize his grandson, in their order, with the various branches of his business; and to advance him as rapidly as his growing proficiency should invite.

The opportunity was wholly unappreciated.

The lack of interest which Cluff manifested; his laziness; the ingenuity that he practiced in evading honest application to legitimate duties; all these traits thoroughly disheartened his would-be benefactor.

The alternative of "college" recurred: and it was with a view to effect his reinstatement, that the good man, with some misgiving, had packed his valise and taken the trip to Schenectady to which we have already alluded.

Before starting, and motived by reluctant prevision, Mr. Hildred had tossed into his baggage, the bundle of "expense accounts" which the lad, theretofore from time to time, had sent his grandfather from college.

* * * * * *

The president hesitated. Young Burle—he objected—had been a "h-a-r-d case." He was sorry to say so, but—with severity—his example had been perniciously bad. The reports of the professors were uniform as to this; *and—softening a little*—while he entertained the

greatest respect, and regard as well, for his grandfather, he really could not consent, etc., etc.

Mr. Hildred produced that bundle of accounts. His heart would have dictated their withholding. But putting aside family pride and reasoning within himself, "It is best for me to know the whole matter," he further addressed the president:

"Will you kindly look over these papers?" placing them at the same time on the table before that functionary: "I wish to ask one or two questions concerning them."

The presidential scrutiny was brought to bear, through magnifying lenses both of mind and mineral, upon the papers thus submitted.

He soon comprehended their deceptive purport. Possibly his previous experience in similar cases may have quickened his faculties. After a pause, and an apologetic short-cough, he quoted from the first voucher:

"'Contributions to Foreign Missions, . . $5.00.'"

"Well?" anxiously interrogated the waiting Mr. Hildred.

"Not probable:" said the president, in reply; and at the same time he slowly shook his head. He went on to explain: "The date he fixes is in December of last year; and that 'Cause' was not presented until three months later, in March." Wheeling about in his chair, and now bringing those investigating lenses to bear upon his questioner, "Your grandson, as I remember, a—a—left college in February?"

There was then no avoidance of an inference of deception in *this* entry. Mr. Hildred made no reply. None was necessary. The president next read,

"'Annual Gymnaseum Fee, ... $10.00.'"

Commenting as before: "Well, we've had the ques-

tion of a gymnaseum for the young men under advisement, but nothing as yet has been done in the matter."

"Might it not refer to dues paid an organization of that kind among the town boys?" ventured Mr. Hildred; but with a doubting reliance.

The president, with a lifting of the eyebrows and a pray-don't-build-on-that-hope expression of countenance, "Could not say—positively." He was loth to drive the iron. He noted plainly the humiliation betrayed by the noble gentleman, as reflected upon him by the duplicity of his degenerate grandson.

No further hypothetical suggestion being hazarded, the president *again* turned to this remarkable file of vouchers.

A peculiar expression, half-contemptuous, quite decided in protest, preominated his opinion of the next item.

"True or untrue?" Mr. Hildred asked with a presentient twinge, and just a shade of impatience.

"Impudently untrue!" declared the president, very positively. Then he explained; "Neither young Burle as an individual, nor any of the classes collectively, have made me any '*present*' since your grandson entered." Settling back in his chair, and speaking aloud to himself: "Really, this fellow would dragoon *me* also as a party to his frauds!"

Grandfather Hildred flushed, and he checked an evident intention to say something. He only requested, however, with manifest effort to maintain his self-control, "Please don't look any further."

With an air which asked politely, "Allow me?" he stretched his arm, possessed himself of the especial voucher *which the president* had thrown back upon the

"TRUE!" DECLARED THE PRESIDENT. (Page 56.)

table, and read the item which had pricked the worthy head of the institution to such indignant negation:

"'My share for *Class-Present* to the president, $15.'"

It's not a pleasant matter to suspect moral deflection in one's own household. Much worse is it when confirmation unmistakable, fixes the matter in certainty.

Mr. Hildred did not further prolong the interview. He rose, saying simply, "I cannot urge you to receive him back." Then he took his leave of the president, and of Schenectady, and returned home, depressed.

Upon his arrival, and on the way up from the depot, he asked of his coachman,

"Anything new, John?"

The man, with apparent embarrassment, replied, "Well, no sir. Unless it may be that you wasn't informed of it, sir."

"'It;'" The answer was not intelligent. "What 'it'? Informed of what?" again inquired Mr. Hildred. He spoke impatiently. "W-h-a-t next?" he thought.

"Young Mr. Cluff, sir. I thought you might a-known it. He's married to Maggie Fitzgerald."

Another shock! But the listener answered nothing. He drew in his breath, his lips, and looked hard at the horses. John imagined that he might be making adverse mental criticism concerning the care of those bays. He was not. He couldn't have told, after reaching home, w[illegible] the blacks or the bays had brought him up.

[illegible] horses his eyes wandered, without special motive, t[illegible] mazy pickets of the roadside fence. The r[illegible]ssage of the vehicle, spinning them into a w[illegible]ve, seemed to carry him back to earliest im-*when, stick* in hand, and on the run, he had *m, merrily*. Then his mind leaped for-

ward again to the present, and recovering, he said to himself, "I'm glad '*it*' is no crime." Pondering his late enlightenment concerning the false vouchers, he repeated to himself, "Yes; I'm glad it's no crime that I hear of."

He was indeed rather surprised to realize that he did not care more about the matter. That Cluff should, in his absence, and without appraising those of his own, take so important a step, would indeed cause mortification to his family: and it was a disappointment to him. But, analyzing present conditions; looking at them as the unprofitable, the unthankful result of a long period of faithful care, patiently bestowed on this wayward grandson, we observe that his discomfited grandfather had now arrived at a state of passive disappointment concerning the young man. He would have felt keener chagrin had the case been that of his own son. The tie removed a degree, perhaps the balk to his wishes annoyed him with but half the sting.

The conduct of young Burle during the past two years did seem to render fallacious and delusive, any promise of his improvement! His grandfather had nearly relinquished such a hope, of him, and for him; although he had not yet acknowledged in such finality, as formally to conclude and announce it to himself. But he began fully to realize the delusiveness of further expectancy. In view of what might have been a worse sequence of preceding conduct, he perceived why he could now say, with pitiable comfort,

"I'm glad it's no crime."

Had young Burle's conduct otherwise been correct, this hasty marriage would not seriously have disturbed *his grandfather. This gentleman* was democratic in his *ideas; and the girl, though* not of his circle, was ami-

able and estimable in character. It was not this act alone, but joined to what had gone before, that made the case seem hopeless. It represented, not an exception, but it indexed a *general* inconsiderate recklessness, touching his obligations to others.

Cluff would have kept away from his grandfather; but he put in a tardy appearance the next day after being especially sent for.

Upon meeting him Mr. Hildred made no delay in coming directly to the point;

"Cluff, are you a married man?"

"Yes, sir;" with an appearance of surprise that his guardian took the *escapade* (for even so the indifferent husband looked upon this holy contract) so quietly.

"Do you love—Maggie *B-u-r-l-e?*"

Cluff seemed visibly put aback by this laconic method of coming at the matter. He was not pleased, furthermore, to be reminded that a "Mrs. Burle" now entered as a constituent with claims, into the problem of his life. His tone in reply showed that even thus soon he felt an impatient irksomeness in respect to the responsibility, and, as well, the restraint involved in this new tie. This feeling he recognized with just a color of resentment:

"Why, yes; I *suppose* I love her."

His honor-loving grandfather was not pleased with such a halting acknowledgment.

"Do you love your—*wife?*" now pointedly demanded this monitor. He was beginning already to espouse the cause of the neglected Maggie. Cluff answ[illegible]d sullenly,

'[illegible]; I love—'my *wife*,' if you will have it so."

"[illegible]*how* otherwise should I have it?" asked his [illegible]*r, with* quietly contained indignation. Then

very seriously: "My son; you have taken upon yourself a very grave responsibility without my counsel or advisement. It affects another also beside yourself. You are twenty-seven years of age, and I could have wished," his voice trembled, "more open treatment at your hands." He paused a moment, then further continuing: "But I shall neither chide nor commend. We will hope that good may come of your marriage. I have now to tell you that, while at Schenectady, I learned of matters which bitterly humiliated me. My confidence in you, my son, has received a shock. But for the sake of your *wife* now," with a lingering emphasis on the word betokening the sacred relation, "you shall have a final opportunity. Nothing would gladden my heart more than to observe in you at last a disposition to give even a halting attention to grave interests which I had hoped that on some day, you would assume with credit."

* * * * * *

Cluff's mother had been Mr. Hildred's only child. Her marriage was not a fortunate one. But not of that here. Her husband's death preceded her own but a few months. She realized that she must soon follow; and it was then that she gave her boy, her only child, ten years of age, into the keeping of her father. Faithful, for seventeen years, had Mr. Hildred been in this guardianship. Constant had been his effort to train this grandson in proper ways. We have seen how ill the requital. But he would not give him up—yet. Though discouraged, he would try once more. He continued:

"I propose to allow you twenty-five hundred dollars as a stated income. This amount will, I think, be *sufficient for you as a married* man, with newly attend-

ant responsibilities. I entreat you to dignify the new relation you have assumed. I shall give you in advance, one-fifth of that amount, and the balance I will hand you in quarterly instalments as the year passes. You shall have two weeks for your own. Find some home near us, and when your vacation is over, and you are settled with your wife, I will call upon you. I want you then to resume your duties under Mr. Fogg, the manager. I beg of you, my dear boy," continued this kind guardian, with speech made hesitating by the emotion which moved him, "be now a man: for Maggie's sake; for my sake; for the sake of your relatives and friends; possibly, by and by, your children's; and most of all, for your dead mother's sake."

Had ever a lad kinder grandfather? Had ever a young man fairer prospects; more promising opportunities?

What was the result?

He disappointed every hope. He frustrated every wish of his family as concerned himself. He was possessed of the devil to go into bad ways; all considerations to the contrary notwithstanding.

He learned to gamble. In seeking opportunity to indulge this vice, he took cruel and unconscionable license with his grandfather's stables, driving his horses in drunken carousals to distant towns, until they either dropped dead, or were returned ruined.

He developed brutal cruelty toward his painstaking little wife, notwithstanding that she tried hard to please him; wishing furthermore to be acceptable to his grandfather, and to his grandfather's people.

He disregarded business claims, making the merest *apologetic pretense* of attention to his obligations. When

at the mills, he hindered rather than helped, and by his turbulent irascible disposition, set every one by the ears. He appeared to be incarnated by a demon of demoralization; and finally he openly and pointedly ignored all remonstrances from his guardian, including even him also in personal affront.

Mr. Hildred bore patiently with it all through the year, and then formally announced to him that their uncertain business relations must cease.

An uncle of the young man, a lawyer, and having political influence at Washington, was now consulted. Through his agency an appointment was obtained for young Burle in one of the Governmental Departments at the capital. Thither he went with his wife.

Unfortunate woman!

But she clung to him. Almost continually she bore upon her the marks of his cruel treatment. But quite the last ounce was not yet.

In Washington his duties were nominal, and his hours few. For a time he made a show of improvement. It was of short duration. The restraining novelty of new surroundings soon gone, he plunged recklessly and unreservedly into the lowest vices, the most abandoned excesses.

Out of political deference to his uncle, and until his year should close, he was tolerated by his superiors. This period being fulfilled, no stretch of political courtesy could longer extend the season of his departmental uselessness, and he was quietly dropped.

Still he remained another year at Washington, during which time he commenced to importune his grandfather for money upon all sorts of pretenses.

Mr. Hildred, in response, frequently sent him funds. But *he finally realized that* doing so was only produc-

tive of evil, as supplying means for the indulgence of gambling vices: therefore he wrote to him at the end of his second year of absence, saying that no further attention would be given to his money-begging letters.

His ill treatment of the gentle Maggie, broke at last her weary neglected heart. She was compelled, with her baby boy, only two months old, to separate from him and seek her own support.

Gladly would Mr. Hildred have provided for her; but she answered sorrowfully, "Let me rely upon myself." She went to New York, and there found a situation as subordinate, in charge of the linen department of the St. Nicholas Hotel.

He followed her.

But when she informed her employer of her husband's past brutal conduct, and expressed the wish never to see him again, her persecutor was curtly and peremptorily excluded.

* * * * * *

Cluff Burle was now thirty years of age, and fairly launched upon the world as a man who lived by his wits. He prefixed "Colonel" to his name, hired desk-room in an office on Wall street, and looked about with faculties sharpened by the need of funds.

No thought of honest endeavor, however, was for a moment entertained by him. Oh, no! He aimed simply at getting other people's money, without a consideration rendered therefor; but at the same time in a way to shield himself.

He was not long in meeting with like-minded associates. His ability would have been his fortune, had it been directed toward honest avocation; but he preferred duplicity and rascality. He affiliated naturally *with criminals.* Putting his wits at work he originated

a "Lottery Prize" fraud: and until this swindle was detected through the able agency of The Society for the Prevention of Crime, he reaped very considerable gains from victims, ready to speculate upon such wild ventures.

Afterwards, associated with others, he became engaged in the nefarious project of publishing and sending indecent literature through the United States Mails. Going as far as he dared, he finally dropped this scheme and turned his attention and ingenuity elsewhere.

Next he devised a nostrum which he named in his advertisements, "The Magic Bloom of Youth Specific;" and through this rank specimen of decoy quackery, together with some "Refocillating Life Pills" which accompanied it, he swindled anew the gullible class, always found ready to send their money on some such preposterous chance.

Cotemporaneously with his operations in this deceptive venture, he was hand and glove with a "ring," known, after its exposure, as the "Saw Dust" swindlers: although he was not an originator in this scheme of crime: a participator rather. It was at this time that he acted also as dealer for the faro bank on Broadway.

We have no desire to dwell further upon his reprehensible methods, but come at once to the period when he drew Jane Stanhope within the deadly entanglement of his projects.

It was in the summer of 186–. He had practised now as a professional swindler for two years, and, owing to an uncomfortable interest in his personal affairs and whereabouts, *developed* on the part of the police, *he was temporarily secluding* himself from their disquieting *solicitude*. It was at the country hotel wher

he was sequestered, that he met the unfortunate Mrs. Stanhope.

He was at this time thirty-two years of age, and a ripe villain. He had all the qualifications for accomplishment in such a character—*save one.* The lack of that attribute constituted an omission in his make-up, which ever deterred from such fixable crime, as, under detection, would have trapped his plans and abridged his liberty: at the same time its absence pushed him, under constraining police surveillance, down to lower levels, and to the plane of more petty but safer descriptions of fraud. It was this elemental pusillanimity which saved his neck from a halter. But in grim compensation for the immunity, he was driven to sicklier degradation.

What was the quality he lacked?

Intrepidity.

He was a coward; a poltroon in any emergency calling for courage. He could bruise and maltreat a woman, or a child; but he never rose, even to the lower prowess plane of ordinary daring.

And such a fellow it was that an ill-starred destiny threw in the way of Jane Stanhope. Of low ancillary cunning, he had an abundance. It served him where fearless audacity aided other criminals. How he compassed the ruin of this unfortunate woman, we already know. For fourteen years now last past has he constrained her to secret collusion with him in a lowest quality of professional swindling. His bad influence, seemingly established, has dominated her life; and her kindred have proscribed her. He has prostituted her talents to wickedness, and has coined money from the *capabilities of her* culture.

But in one respect, for a long time, she avoided com-

pliance with his schemes. God forgot her not! A redeeming flame still burned, fed by the tenderest instincts of a woman. It was in respect to her son that those motives rose above all fear, and she would neither be controlled, bullied or balked.

For eleven years subsequent to Burle's subornation she insisted defiantly in keeping Connie removed from the demoralizing atmosphere surrounding herself.

While Connie was yet a baby, she made arrangement whereby he was retained in charge by an estimable family in the country, far removed from the malign influences of his scheming "Uncle." Most of the money realized from their deceptive practices, came first into her hands; and she scrupled not to deceive her paramour in respect to sums withheld for secret appli ance to the boy's maintenance.

But soon after the lad had reached the age of eleven, death broke up the family where he had been sheltered, and she was compelled to receive him back.

She intended this as only temporary. But once present, she found herself utterly embarrassed. It had been impossible for her to get him away again.

Burle had eagerly seized upon the lad's offices as a run-between, and, try as she would, she could not release him.

Thus for three years had Connie in turn been suborned, and his mother was becoming desperate about it.

Had Burle realized the dangerous quality of the impulse which he provoked, when, in the person of her child, he stayed not to affront, wound and outrage the instincts of motherhood in this woman, he would have hurried the *boy away with* cowardly despatch.

Such then were the conditions under which Connie

had remained with his mother during the three years immediately past, in "Island Number Ten." At this point are introduced the principal events of our story.

We cannot claim for Connie that during this time he had remained above the influences about him. He was a young boy, and the muddy pool had smirched him to a degree. The good language brought from his country home, had imperceptibly suffered slangy innovations. An occasional oath even, was not unfamiliar to his tongue. But this was also true: his natural impulses were in the direction of honorable endeavor. The association and training which so happily controlled the first eleven years of his life, confirmed and fixed good traits to a degree which influenced him mainly in the right.

Thus—the baby not yet included—we have intelligent knowledge of three of the characters, who, to very considerable degree, will have our attention in this volume.

CHAPTER V.

THE "MODUS OPERANDI."

Show[illegible] ow vice fattens upon a revenue planned in deceit; a[illegible]e God-implanted impulses of noble benevolent h[illegible]rts sometimes are traded upon.

[illegible]re than two months now have passed since we [illegible] Crissie, held in Connie's arms, on the stone step[illegible]ance to Island Number Ten. Burle no longer [illegible]ums that the baby is not sufficiently "worked [illegible]" [illegible]t that Jane Stanhope has carried out his [illegible]ions. Other agencies have had a dire influ-

ence. The fetid atmosphere of the place, the miscellaneous food that the little one has irregularly been given, her deprivation of sunshine and out-door exercise; all these conditions have acted to deplete and break her ruddy health.

Burle has experienced serious trouble though, in coercing Jane to a criminal use of the child after the manner planned.

Upon one occasion, the baby, in pursuance of this scheme for an additional drawing feature, had been placed in bed with the woman. But the project proved a doubtful, not to say a dangerous one. Jane's motherly instincts had not yet been sufficiently stamped out; and an outburst of remorse, at a critical juncture, wholly disarranged the conduct of the monstrous farce.

"But you've got to come to it;" Burle had said to her, in one of the pauses of his work.

But what description of "*work*" was it that engaged this fellow? We had supposed that "work" was very far from his inclinations. Let us have an account of it.

* * * * * * *

The "sick chair" in Jane Stanhope's room held a "burly" form. The fraudulent "Colonel" occupied it. He was composing a remarkable letter.

At intervals he paused, looked up and away into space, meditatively; then, as catching another fly in the web of his thought, he spiked it quickly with his pen.

A tricky old spider was he,
Who laughed in his guttural glee,
As he spun his snares so slily,
To catch th' benevolent unwary!
Finally he dropped his pen,
Tightly shut his mouth awry,
And one vicious bilous eye
Corresponding;

then, all in one motion, he engaged the muscles of one side of his face with hideous effect, in a spasmodic effort, apparently, to defeat nature, and screw the organs of sight and speech together.

But this facial cast was involuntary. The twist was habitual, (like the twister's, who twisted one twist with a twist,) and appeared to operate as an astringent in promoting that concentration of ideas necessary to the revision of these compositions.

To the review now of this one, with the aid of his remaining eye, he diligently addressed himself; very much however to the discomfiture of his nose, which, like an uncomfortable neutral, appeared to protest, as being in a perilous position between approaching belligerents.

Suddenly he released his nose: "How can I think," he demanded impatiently, "when you make such a clatter?"

Mrs. Stanhope was washing the breakfast dishes. She replied nervously, "I didn't mean to disturb you."

"You did;" he snapped back captiously.

This rebuff she appeared to interpret, "Hold your tongue;" for she joined no issue upon it, or made further reply.

The nose writhed in another contortion, and for another few minutes there was silence in the room.

Suddenly, and with the air of "a task completed," he roused himself, threw back his head, stretched upward his arms and grasped the posts of the "sick chair." Thus supported, he inhaled a very long, a very deliberate and a very deep breath. He held it for a few seconds, as though to enjoy the sensation of *expanded lungs*; and then, with distended jowls, siz-

don't," he continued with a profane imprecation
ting the aforesaid gentleman's soul, "I'll size him
a heavier dose of agony."
n, further, with a ruminating air of determina-
mplying that he had settled the matter in his
iind, "I'm bound to get my little percentage out
'pile.' I'll do it somehow, if I have to sling a
ıll of misery at him."
owing, is the letter devised. It purports a
' as its writer. As a specimen of the kind, it
ıterest the reader. There are those in this city
ɔoklyn who will recognize its general character.
are those in this city of Brooklyn who have
ed many such letters; for it is a copy, verbatim,
s to names, places and dates.

"Please read through.
Brooklyn Aug. 10th.
To Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Hunge.ford,
——Clinton Avenue

help us as we are almost strangers in Brooklyn, having always resided in Philadelphia, where I lost my husband, until within the past few months, when I came here, to find my brother and look for work.

This unrelenting strain upon heart and brain is fast killing I am unfitted for so much hardship and starvation living. My home is in danger of being taken away, and it almost crazes me to know that I am so powerless to free myself from so much distress and misery.

In this trying hour I now turn to you for relief. And could you realize what we have endured in silence you could not hesitate helping us.

It is humiliating to be necessitated make such an appeal. But what else can a helpless woman do. It is the only alternative left me and I beg your manly kind interest and sympathy and help.

My little boy will hand you this, and if you will only send me by him, *he will wait*, a few dollars I shall be deeply grateful and I will as soon as I am well, which I hope will be soon, give your family its full value in washing.

I am now and have seen better days, but am penniless, heartbroken and very much dejected and without work.

I am a stranger, and a recent resident of Philadelphia and I sincerely pray you will not pass my petition by unheeded in this the hour of my greatest extremity.

Respectfully and regretfully,
Mrs. Jane Stanhope.

fourth floor Cor State & Furman
Room 28"

"Yes," he further reflected aloud, again contemplating his production, "I rather think he'll rise to that fly. If he don't, I'll double on th' 'harrowing.' Mustn't shy him too sudden though. If he don't pipe to this, we must give the old duffer three days grace, '*and we a-starvin' all the time!*' and then we'll wind him another, with a double agony percussion cap."

"Come here;" he commanded suddenly and *peremptorily to the* woman.

She obeyed.

Pointing to the draft of the letter, he ordered briefly, "Copy that."

Excepting the easy chair, which Burle himself occupied, the edge of the wood-box was the only other seat offering. To relinquish to her his own, was not his intention. She did not expect any such consideration. He yawned, stretched his legs, and took his ease otherwise; looking sleepily about him.

She laid hold of the table, drew it across the floor and adjacent to the wood-box. Essaying to steady her sitting upon the uncertain edge of this receptacle, she applied herself to the task commanded. Meantime he rocked comfortably; back and forth.

A common pendulum clock ticked upon the mantel. He glanced up at it and announced to himself in undertone soliloquy, "Ten o'clock." Then hitching his chair to the window and looking down into Furman street, he continued in the same meditative "aside," "No danger of any one coming yet."

Turning in his chair he looked across at his companion. She was diligently employed at her task. A devilish whim seized him.

There was neither reason nor special cause to account for the motive of this base eccentricity, further perhaps than might be explained in his desire for some diversion. We will say then, the monotony of the room, or perhaps the irritable ticking of that clock now bred it in him. He was a man who often resented even *such* things. Unfortunately for Jane Stanhope his unreasoning irritability usually exploded its force upon her head, without reference to the primary cause.

No objection presenting why it should be otherwise now, with a view to the exercise of this whimsicality, he got *up from his chair and* went deliberately over to

Jane's side. Pausing there a moment, the better to direct the execution of his low purpose, he suddenly, without warning of any kind, administered upon the upturned unguarded cheek of his companion, a stinging blow with his open palm.

Surprised, taken wholly unawares, she sprang up with crimsoning face; and a heavy coil of hair, displaced by this brutal assault, fell down upon her back.

"Why didn't you answer me?" he demanded, working himself into an excitement.

"I didn't hear you;" she made haste to reply.

Watching him doubtfully and keeping at a distance, as uncertain whether his attack would be followed up, she furtively gathered up her hair. She did not resent his blow. She seemed rather to fear and wish to avoid him.

He had not asked her any question!

She knew it.

He, of course, knew it also. Such, however, was the unreasoning, the brutish contrariety of this man, that, had she replied, "You asked me no question;" he would have then hotly retorted, "You call me a liar, do you?" and with this he would have shown his fiendish perversity still further by proceeding to choke her; this being his favorite method of argument ——with a woman!

All this she had in a moment anticipated, but, with ready tact in her answer, had also avoided by accepting his implication; even though she knew it was a lying one.

The answer mollified him. If he chose to imply a falsehood, he didn't choose to be balked in it.

"I asked you if you expected anybody," he said. *And having* now confirmed the implied lie by the lie

direct, without contradiction, he felt that his unaccountability to any one was sufficiently asserted. "If you expected anybody—*now*;" he repeated, with a nod toward the clock.

She hastened to say that she did not—"expect anybody—'*now*'."

He resumed his seat, and she glided back to her copying.

Almost immediately there was heard a rumbling sound in the street. His attention being at once drawn, he noted a carriage, holding up just at the Furman street door. Bringing to bear a closer investigation, he beheld a lady in the act of descending to the curb. The window being open he easily overheard the concluding part of an inquiry, "—where Mrs. Stanhope lives?"

The lady, evidently uncertain, was addressing questions to the children, interrupted in their play upon the steps.

Springing across the room he denounced hotly, "You liar! there *is* some one;" and he doubled his fist to give her a blow: one this time that should mean something.

But on second thought—"Not now. Business first."

He set about him, giving directions hastily. "Clear away those dishes: into the closet with them. Off with your shoes, your dress: into bed. Tie that towel 'round your head;" at the same time flinging her one hastily.

All the while, by frequent visits to, and glances from, the window, he kept watch upon the arrival in the street below.

The lady now entered *the lower* hall.

Pausing suddenly in an expeditious getting of him-

self away, and, as one might arrest his retreat, stopping one more moment to put up a couple of last almost forgotten bars, he asked sharply, "Where's the boy—— and that brat?"

By this time in bed, Mrs. Stanhope was just concluding her execution of the "towel" part of his rapidly given orders. She replied simply, as she settled and drew the coverlet up to her chin, "Both in the attic."

There is no time for further preliminary arrangement. The curtain is about to rise on the farce. The settings of the stage must remain as they are. Whoever is coming, and whatever for, he must leave her to manage the emergency as her wits suggest.

He springs first to the outer door.

Does he open it, hurry out, and into his own room beyond?

No: he unlocks and sets it gently ajar. Then hastily catching up his hat, together with the writing materials from the table, he approaches the wardrobe.

Is he about to hide himself *there?*

It would seem so, for he grasps the handle.

But the wardrobe *door* does not open! It is locked!

Ah! Remarkable artifice! Devilish ingenuity! Yielding to his quick effort as he pulls the knob towards him, the heavy press, moving upon castors well oiled, describes the segment of an opening door, and rolls freely out into the room.

The device is now understood. The wardrobe has been attached, by screws at its back, to the door behind it. Pulling the front of this receptacle forward, there-by opens the inner door of communication to the *apartment.* This is his contrivance for secret *communication* with his own room.

Now he passes quickly through; and in another moment the huge mask, rolling smoothly upon its lubricated bearings, noiselessly resumes its position, as he draws the door to its place behind him.

The trap is ready!

His departing manœuvre was a wily one. The door leading into the hall stands invitingly a few inches ajar.

It was not intended that any facility, calculated to aid in the steering of this victim into the manovery, should be omitted.

The management proved successful.

Very soon a knocking is heard; a soft detonation, as from a gloved hand.

"Come in—please." This invitation is given as with a manifest effort.

A lady, rather stout, of middle age, evidently of means, enters in response to the invitation. She looks toward the bed, and her eyes fall upon the face and outlines of the decoy. In a moment, solicitude and sympathy are expressed on her countenance, and she softly approaches.

"This is—Mrs. Stanhope. Am I right?" she gently asserts and asks in the same breath.

The woman in the bed turns, as with painful difficulty, and slowly. Her face is thus brought more in the direction of her visitor. She replies simply, "Yes, ma'am."

"You do not, of course, know me," explains the lady, "but I am Mrs. Credulo, from —— Washington Avenue. I received your letter yesterday evening. Too late then, my husband said, and he w-o-u-l-d n-o-t hear *to my going out.* But now you must tell *me—Are you very ill though?*"

The lady thus interrupts herself: the thought occurring that possibly this poor soul may be too weak to talk.

"Oh no! I *am* weak; but more from the lack of nourishment."

Mrs. Credulo is now doubly solicitous. She listens with increasing interest. Jane goes on.

"I have denied myself for my child's sake. But I haven't—I haven't been able to get enough, even for *him*."

"You poor thing!" Mrs. Credulo sympathizingly condoles. Then she looked inquiringly about her, and Jane, anticipating her next question, adds,

"He is not in now. I had to do a terrible thing this morning, and," covering her face, "it nearly breaks my heart." Then, in hesitating tones, as though confessing to something which overwhelmed her with shame, "I sent the little fellow out this morning, to—to beg."

The good visitor is visibly affected. Her interest deepens. The woman in bed does not pause long; she again continues:

"It is a terrible humiliation for me, and for my child too. I never—had—to do it—before."

Here, emotion for the moment appears to overcome speech, and she can say no more. She presses a corner of the towel to her face, as though sobbing in the shame and overflow of her distress.

There is a dead silence, broken only by this muffled lamentation; and the clock ticks audibly, "Lies! Lies!—Lies! Lies!"

But no heed is given it.

Mrs. Credulo is not unfamiliar in the homes of the *poor. She has* been a Good Samaritan among the

', she raps smartly with her fan upon the sill. ssful now, she commands with an air and tone of l manager who knows her business:

aniel; hitch those horses somewhere, and bring at basket to—(I wonder if there is a number? yes; I remember;" talking to herself,) "to ber Twenty-eight, three flights;" she shouts in usion. Then noting the curious children, at-d by the unusual sight of a carriage, she adds ngly, "Put your whip inside and draw up the win-." She has a full voice, an asserting mien, and el understands that when she gives an order, there's no tardy movements in its execution.

s. Credulo is not at all of the "sylph" outline. gure, and in figures, her avoirdupois proportions ate—one hundred and sixty. Her heart corre-ls.

e now draws the large chair to the bed, seats her-nd her air plainly says, "Can you not tell me

such method as to bring money. Food and delicacies are all quite acceptable——in their way; but *money*, MONEY only will satisfy the man, who, in the next room, listens to every word of this conversation.

"Oh yes, I'll try—and—tell you. You are so kind."

Daniel interrupts here, and deposits a basket upon the table. Mrs. Credulo also interrupts:

"Stay; let me get you a bite first:" and the good woman bustles about.

Soon from the generous willow repository there is drawn and placed in tempting order upon the table, an abundant spread of cold meats, buttered bread, cold coffee, boiled eggs and cake. Indeed, Jane has enough set before her on the table now drawn to her side, to satisfy the ravenous demands of a healthy stone cutter at noon.

Having breakfasted but two hours previous, she does not betray eagerness for the food. She explains, "I'm so faint like; I can't seem to eat much. But my Connie will be—oh, so glad!"

Connie is at this time in the attic with the stolen baby; and having been particularly enjoined by his mother, when she sent him there, to remain until he was apprised of Burle's departure, there is no liability of his inopportune appearance upon this scene.

Mrs. Stanhope makes pretense to raise herself painfully in the bed. She leans over and partakes sparingly

[illegible]ls, breathing all the time with an apparent
[illegible]rt catches, and picking a little here and
a sick person without appetite might do.
[illegible]gh though too weak to eat any more, she
[illegible] again. Then she resumes, brokenly and

[illegible]—I came here, last April—to try—and

my brother, who I was sure worked in New York. I lived in Philadelphia. But after husband's death we lost everything. He was sick two years before he died, and all our little savings of years went for doctor's bills, and taking care of him. He died in March, and——"

Here her voice, which had faltered, grew still more tremulous. She paused in her narrative as though to conquer emotions which the sorrowful reminiscence evoked.

"In April I wrote my brother in New York, and asked him to let me come to him, and to get me something to do. I did not get any answer; but I came on in a few days, for I had heard that he was here, and working in Fulton Market."

Mrs. Credulo showed an increasing interest. She leaned forward in the pause made, with an air betokening a disposition to ask some troublesome questions. Lest they might be embarrassing, Jane hurried to shut her off:

"But I could not find him!"

Mrs. Credulo's countenance fell at this. She relapsed again into an attitude of solicitous attention.

"I had just enough money to get, with my few things, over from New York, and into this room. A man who worked in Fulton Market, told me there were some cheap places here, and he gave me the directions. I had to pay seven dollars in advance though, before the agent would let me come in. This took all that was left of my money, saving a little change.

"I would have been glad though, to have hurried away the next day; for I found that it was a terrible place. A man *was killed in the* saloon below, the same *night that I came in; and the* people in the house are

—such rude persons. I never can have anything to do with them. Indeed, I have seen better days."

"Yes, my poor woman," acquiesced Mrs. Credulo, "one can easily perceive that, in your language and manner. But why," with much surprise in her tone, "did you stay here, when you found it such a horrid place?"

Jane answered, "However much I might have wished to do so, I could not get away; for, as I told you, after paying the rent in advance, I had no money left to go elsewhere.

"I finally procured some sewing to do; and once a week, a washing. I worked very hard through April and most of May. But in the latter part of May I nearly broke down."

Here was threatened another irruption, similar to the one which had rounded off the period closing her reference to the death of her mythical husband. But she appeared to conquer it, and once more took up her story.

"Still I struggled along, doing sewing for a shop at starvation wages, until even that small stay was taken from me; because the warm weather was coming on and they couldn't sell any more of the things.

"When the first of June came, I just could scrape enough together to pay *that* month's rent; and afterwards, by pawning one thing after another, we barely lived up to the first of July, and then I gave out entirely." And here she illustrated by——"giving out entirely" herself.

Mrs. Credulo essayed to lead her back to recovered composure by turning her mind to the little boy; "*What about* him now?" she suggested with forced *sprightliness.*

"My little Connie gets an odd job occasionally at running an errand, or something else like; but it barely buys a little bread. That is all he has had, poor fellow, for many days.

"The landlord wanted to put me out for the July rent, but I begged him hard to wait a little; and I said I would find some way to pay him. If I could only get a little nourishing food, I know I should soon be out again. And then, you know, I have been offered all the work I can do at making workingmen's jumpers."

Mrs. Credulo did not "know" it; but her air kindly granted it. Not being clear however, as to the ability of the woman to take work, even if offered, she gently opposed with, "But you are *sick* now."

"Yes; but it's only from utter exhaustion, and want of food." In adaptation thereto, Jane now talked with even more apparent effort.

The lady suggested some Hospital.

"But what would become of Connie?"

Mrs. Credulo could offer no solution to *that* dilemma.

"No," added Jane, appearing to rally again; "a few dollars *now*, would be a mine of wealth to me. I could pay my rent, get some food, soon grow strong, and then I would have all the work necessary to keep me along. This jumper work I could commence to do, sitting up here, or in my chair.

"O my dear lady!" and Jane, with a quivering pitiful look lifted to Mrs. Credulo's face, struggled to her elbow; and now indeed there are real tears streaming from her eyes, "If you could only deliver me from the black misery that has settled upon my unfortunate head, I could never do enough for you."

Verily she is *speaking* at last in feverish genuine *earnestness! Directing* upward her face, her overflowing

eyes, she exclaimed desparingly, "I think my God has deserted me. Alas! What have I done! What am—I —doing!"

Her head fell down into her hands, and there was now no hypocrisy in the emotion which swept over her. Her agony bore a triple burden. Bitter regret for the loss of what might have been; anguish and humiliation in the desolating realization of what was: and all this mingled with a sorrowful incriminating remorse for the deception now practised upon this kind motherly heart, beating so near to her. Her own reached out in its desperate need, as though longing to confess her burdens.

But at this moment, in the next room, there was heard an impatient admonitory movement. It quite frightened away the good impulse.

Mrs. Credulo was alarmed for the woman, and she urged, rising hastily from her chair, "Do, I pray you, my poor child, be composed. You will make yourself worse. Be encouraged, for don't you see that you have already found a friend?"

The good lady was now bending across the bed, and she added soothingly, "I shouldn't have allowed you to talk so long about yourself: and I wouldn't," she continued in an "aside" to herself, "if I hadn't promised Dr. Jourdan that I would a-l-w-a-y-s investigate; and be sure a case was worthy, before helping it."

Jane dropped her hands and once more looked toward her visitor. A desolating agony had indeed swept over that soul. Her great black eyes, dishevelled hair, tear stained cheeks and quivering mouth: they all pleaded for her in mute pathos of distress, as no words *could have done.* Her regard seemed directed toward *Credulo; yet* her eyes, as in a sad reverie, looked far

beyond. Her mind for the moment, had gone back to the years long past. Her air of crushed dejection, as at that moment betokened in face and attitude, would have touched the heart and pocket of a miser. However, her thoughts, then, were very far removed from any partaking in dissembling. She had abandoned herself *to* herself, and no longer calculated upon—effect. Introduced as an actor of simulated misery, there had, in the midst of the wicked play, swept upon her the stinging realization of a woe greater than any caused by hunger; more terrible than that produced by the direst want.

But recalled, an unwilling slave, by the warning movement now again coming to her ears from the room adjoining, she once more, wearily assumed the deceptive bearing which her bondage imposed, and in answer to a question put at the moment by Mrs. Credulo, she replied,

"'The rent?' Yes: that is seven dollars. It is long past due, and this disturbs me more than our want of bread. I can bear to go hungry; but what *should* I do, wandering about the streets!"

Mrs. Credulo had evidently been asking herself the same question. Her assenting air implied as much. Jane Stanhope's remarkable beauty was still discernible under the harrow of all her dragging experiences; and she was not far beyond thirty years of age.

"I should have to go to Flatbush, wouldn't I?" she asked, as terrified.

"I'll see that you don't;" pronounced Mrs. Credulo emphatically. Then looking about the room as though in search of a cupboard, "But where shall Daniel put these *things?*"

"*If you will, please let them* remain on the table;"

half suggested half requested Jane in response. Mrs. Credulo acquiesced. Then she abruptly asked a question which had been on her mind while riding down in her carriage:

"How came you to write to *me?* Did you know me?"

This was not an unusual question. Jane was ready with a plausible answer, and replied therefore with apparent naturalness, "One of the City Missionaries, who came in here a few days ago, said that you were such a good, kind, benevolent lady: having also *abundant means.*"

This was an adroit reply. It flattered the kind lady's approbativeness, and at the same time challenged the plentitude of her liberality. Mrs. Credulo's face had lighted up with a look of pleased gratification at the first part of the answer: the concluding clause disconcerted this, and changed it to the expression, "on guard."

"You must not rely upon me for very much money;" she cautioned quickly. In her mind she judged that Mrs. Stanhope might expect more than she could apportion to her, and therefore abate her own personal effort in proportion to that over-expectancy. She was glad to aid her to "a reasonable extent," but not to a degree which should encourage burdensome reliance.

Jane saw this drift of mind in the expression of face, and even before her visitor had uttered the cautionary modification of her largess. She was ready and replied,

"I do not need—much, Mrs. Credulo."

Another adroit answer. And it was made in a modest reluctance of tone, well calculated to allay any alarm concerning too-often "after-importunities." I

seemed plainly to say, "God knows, my dear lady, only desperate straits have induced me to petition for money. But what can I do? However, I will tax your kindness as lightly as possible."

Mrs. Credulo so interpreted it, and was quite ready to ask in return,

"*How* much, now, my dear woman?"

The matter having now been brought nearly to a favorable conclusion, Jane, before replying, gauged her questioner with skillful mental estimate. Then she answered,

"If I could raise ten——"

But noting a momentary shade of doubt on her visitor's face, she made an amendatory shading of the figure first named, to correspond;

"Or even *seven* dollars now, I am quite sure that I could turn myself. Wouldn't you," hesitatingly, "let me return it to you?"

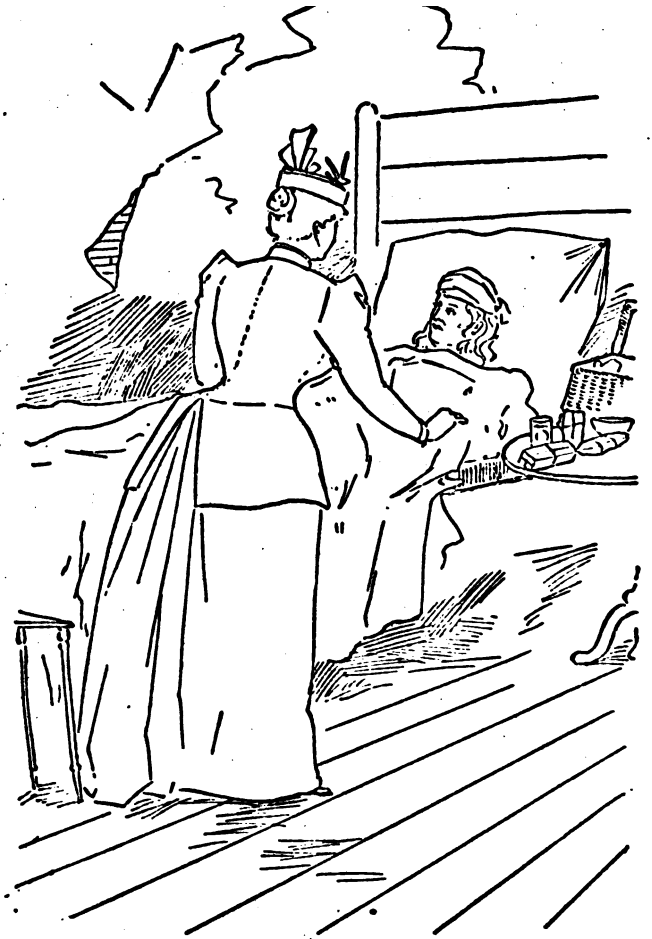
This last little coup finished the business neatly.

"Bless you!" Mrs. Credulo replied good-naturedly, "I shall not refuse, if ever you *can* easily repay it."

Dear kind lady! She counted out ten dollars; gave them into Jane's fingers; rested her own plump fair hand for a moment on the moist raven hair of the woman beside her: then withdrawing to find her gloves and fan, said, as she prepared to go,

"Perhaps I'll run in again soon, and learn how you are getting along."

Mrs. Stanhope thanked her with much apparent feeling: then watched her furtively as she retired from the room.



"HOW MUCH, NOW, MY DEAR WOMAN?" (Page 86.)

CHAPTER VI.

AT TERRIBLE COST: BUT FOR HER CHILD.

The decoy having proved a success, the spider gathereth in the spoils.

AGAIN the *mask* rolled forward, opening to admit Burle as he returned into the room. He trod stealthily. Approaching the outer door, he adroitly reconnoitered down the hall. Following up, he peered down the stairway. Mrs. Credulo might return! Should she do so, unannounced, his future schemes, in so far as this lady or her immediate friends are concerned, may suffer embarrassment.

Wise forethought! Has not Mrs. Credulo just—"made a personal investigation!" And certainly, as settling the question of worthy distress in Number Twenty-eight, it has been affirmative. She will make known her conclusions whenever occasion invites, or wherever opportunity offers.

Should there come now to her ears some counter report, emanating perhaps from that, to him, detestable "Society of Organized Charity," wherein should be uncovered the facts *as they are*, she will receive such account with incredulity, and, no doubt, oppose to it a spirited protest. Has she not—"enquired into the worthiness of this case" *herself!*

People maintain with tenacity their own opinions, notwithstanding they have been cursorily arrived at; *because* they *are* their own. They do not kindly in*cline to the adoption* of opposing conclusions, notwith-

standing such are offered, nay confirmed, as the result of careful and skilled inquiries; made, too, by experienced investigators, having every possible auxiliary facility.

Innocence is presupposed; and any challenge of integrity, shall ask acquiescence only per force of indubitable evidence. Burle knows that Mrs. Credulo will now stoutly maintain the soundness of a sham: whereas, should she, returning unexpectedly, herself behold a strange man in this room, possibly in the very act of appropriating her money, so differently intended, she would thereafter as energetically denounce, as she will now valiantly defend, this fraud.

For all of these reasons then, this adept in human prejudices took good care to see the lady safely off.

The last rustle of her silks having died away upon the stairs, he hurried back to the room and continued his observations from the window. Daniel was holding open the coach door. Entering her carriage, Mrs. Credulo was driven rapidly away.

Burle watched the disappearing equipage with a grin. "She's well stuffed;" he commented. Then he bethought himself of the spoils.

He looks toward the bed. The figure still lies there. It is motionless. Its face is hidden in its hands.

Ah, well! Why not indulge her for a few moments? She did it very cleverly.

No; changing his mood; she finished it bunglingly. She placed too cheap a price upon her commodity.

And now he recalls the passionate pathos of her final address. The intervening partition had not prevented his observation of its intensity. While he had *wondered, musing upon* her growing proficiency in

dissimulation, he had not forgotten to adequately appraise those syllables. Speculating at the time, he had soliloquized greedily, "Those words are dollars to me."

Verily, a grasping feelingless fellow is this omnivorous pauper! He can coolly calculate the productive effect of a tear, the value of a sigh, the cash potency of a sob. He can estimate and weigh their vendibility with discriminating exactness. And now he remembers the exceptional excellence of these wares just offered. They went at too low a price. He is indignant

Approaching the figure which continues to lie, face hidden, he demands with an explosive imprecation, "Why, — —— you, didn't you strike her for fifteen dollars?"

The woman turned towards him. She removed her hands and revealed the sad face. Tears were in her eyes. They appealed, "Oh, I am so tired of this deception! Won't you release me?"

He resented the appeal. It implied condemnation of his daily practices. It evidenced her abating co-operative interest: therefore he was angry. Indeed, his moods of late had been, more than ever, querulous toward this poor creature.

Since Connie came, a s-o-m-e-thing had sprung up between them which threatened his ascendancy. He had not yet analyzed it; but he knew that it was there. Not being able to define it, locate and stamp upon it, he was all the more irritated when pricked by it.

Let us thank God for the inception of an awakening *which may yet save her!*

Yes: she loathes now the part that she plays, as she

has never loathed it before. Her boy's face, his words and companionship; they have awakened impulses long dormant. She longs to be a better woman, for—Connie's sake. If this is not checked, Burle will note a serious interruption to his traffic. A realization of this is impressed by the face which now so piteously turns to him.

Yet she has uttered no word. She has not reproached him.

Again he is pricked by that undefined foreshadowing something, and it chafes him. Approaching nearer, and with angry emphasis, he begins a repetition of his demand: "I *say!* Why didn't you——"

By this time he is close to the bed. She mutely holds toward him the ten dollars. The bills are wet with her tears. He takes them and changes his unfinished challenge to the snarling comment,

"Ten dollars!" adding in a tone of surly disparagement, "And you might just as well have had fifteen.'

She sighs in a sad hopeless way.

The sigh flutters through the air and reaches his ears. He scrutinizes her again disapprovingly. Plainly her interest in this business is qualified with dangerous tendencies. He is perplexed. His momentary displeasure has effervesced. He pockets the money and sits down, moody.

"You *are* a cheerful party now, aren't you?" he submits with irony.

"I say to you, Cluff, with sorrow, I'm conscience-burdened about the way we're living. Sometimes I loathe myself for what I do."

"*Go on then; stop your* kicking and loathe your*self some more. It pays;* and," with imprecation

upon her, "it would pay a cursed sight better if you'd add a little more cheek to your loathing. Do you suppose these rich noodles'll ever miss the money we get out of 'em? I just like to foolish 'em in their cursed conceit. They think they know so much! D—n 'em all, and their slobbering palaver, together! I laugh though, to hear 'em talk about—coming *here* to—'*inves-ti-gate*'."

His face glowered and darkened when this word, scornfully uttered from his lips, sounded on his ears.

"There's one fellow," speaking more now to himself, and walking up and down the room, "that I'd like to 'investigate'." He bit savagely at the word as it escaped his teeth. "I'd like to pursue that investigation, I would, on his scabby carcass. I'd go about it with a knife; and you bet your fool soul I'd have the tool well sharpened. I could just cut out his bloody liver and kick it to the first dog!" stamping his foot. "I'd do it with a jolly good will. He's spoilt more lays for me than cozens I've puppy-capped to cover 'em. I'll get even with him though—some day: and it'll be a scald for him then; and don't you forget it.

"Investigations!" he further exclaimed contemptuously. "I don't kick on these mummeries from rich goosecaps. I get no end of diversion over *their* 'sa-ga-cious inquiries.' But *this* one, who's wedging his mug here just now, to tip comers on my private bob-cappers, and otherwise bu'st my little games; it's his sloggy interfering yawp I'd like to muzzle. Curse him! I'll pocket him yet. I'll make it a hole, six by two."

All this may be unintelligible to the reader, until we explain that the Secretary of the Society of Organized *Charity had exposed* this fellow's frauds to various members *of that organization*, who had enquired about Mrs.

Stanhope's case. A summary disposition, then, of this intermeddler, would, no doubt, to the "fraud" himself, have been a very consolatory one. Under the contemplative cheer of some violent taking off of this officious interponent, he half unbent, and resumed with a tolerant growl to his companion,

"You made a good mouth this time, I should say from what I heard; only, like a lickerish lurk, you plumped her for 'ten,' when you might just as well have had 'fifteen'."

"Can't we do something else?" she asked, again breaking her silence; disregarding too his coarsely qualified commendation. She was strongly moved by the impulse which lately had laid hold of her. "Why won't you set about something in which I could help you without violating my conscience?"

"Harping on that yet, are you?" was the answer she got. "What pattering nonsense *is* this, that you are getting into your head?" Then in an undertone, addressing to himself, "I know she humps herself sometimes; but I didn't think she was altogether dead gone on this —on this amazing virtuous awak'ning. 'Virtuous awak'ning!'" he repeated in exclamation, contemptuously. "Yes: that's a good name for it. That's what Jowl would call it. I must get Jowl to pump this queasy blobberish out of her."

Jeremiah Jowl, who irreverently prefixed "Rev." to his name, was a crony and companion of Burle's, in this "fraudulent-getting" vocation. Burle's estimate of him was given with unction: "He's a holy brimstone fake, with a brain pan and a jaw twister to swaddle the best of 'em. He could cackle sprats out of a stiff. Oh, he's *an anointed apostle!*"

This "apostle's" "Coddy-moddy-gull," as he himself

named it, was known to practitioners in fraud, as "The Street Missionary bluff." Under pretense of arduous night-and-day labors as a missionary "without salary," in the slums of New York city, he levied large contributions upon the wealthy credulous. We shall have more hereinafter to say concerning this irreverend impostor. Meantime, returning to Burle:

The humor taking him just then; nay, for diversion if nothing more, he submitted for the moment to the absurdity of this "virtuous" suggestion. In this mood, though still "playing" her, he continued,

"You want me to do something—pious, do you? Well, now! What's it to be, my newly awakened Saint Stanhope? Make it congenial; something to my liking, and perhaps——"

She waited. He leered at her but did not continue, and she ventured in reply, "Let us get away: *far* away. Let us abandon this vile swindling business. Let us go where we are not known, and I am sure that you would be happier in some honorable work."

Now thieves, in their common colloquies, do not favor designative allusions that imply crookedness. With considerable resentment this one retorted,

"And you throw it in my face that I'm not in an 'honorable' calling. Where are you then?"

"I don't deny that I am an accomplice;" she answered. "God forgive me! I know that it is *not* honorable to trade, as we do, by means of tricks and artifice, upon the best impulses of the best and kindest people."

He raised his hands in mock exclamatory surprise, *and sniggered scornfully*, "Lo, the righteous female! *Lo, the frilled she*-missionary! Come to judge us, has

she?" Then his tone altered, and he demanded savagely, "What else now?"

At once she grew timorous, realizing—his mood changed—that he might at any moment thrust his fist into her face, or otherwise brutally entreat her. But she gathered some courage, reasoning within herself, "He is not as angry as I might have expected."

She raised and supported herself upon one elbow. Throwing off the coverlet she edged toward him. Finally she sat upon the side of the bed near to him and besought with earnest entreaty in her eyes:

"*Would* you go away with me and commence a new life?"

Her suggestion was displeasing. He glowered at her without making any reply. Again she continued:

"I would go *with you*. I would do anything if you would only give up this kind of living. I would work hard with my hands."

Poor creature! Not even the legal bond between them, and her awakened sense of rectitude condemning his doings! Yet she will accept her fate and remain with him if he will only change for the better.

Her appeal produced no impression, if we may judge from the curt and ugly negative with which he dispatched it. Certainly he gave it scant consideration, and his next question showed that his thoughts had gone elsewhere.

"I'd like to know where Connie was last Sunday?" He asked this question distrustfully, as under the impulse of a sudden suspicion.

She hesitated.

"Well?" with a *visible rising* of temper. Her hesi*tation went to confirm his* suspicion: "Are you going *to answer me?*"

"He went to church." Her tone and air had the semblance of a confession.

Burle was surprised. His doubt of her had not gone as far as this. Here indeed was the evidence of deflection! Here was a hint of mutiny to come! It was several moments before he gathered himself.

"Blast him! I believe that boy will yet—" We cannot repeat his concluding sentences. They were too profane for expression here. They referred, in substance, to Connie as a hated missionary of interference, whose influence was awakening impulses in Jane which threatened his control of her. For this reason, of late, any mention, invited or otherwise of Connie, was as the flaunting of a red streamer. Again he pushed the question, eyeing her with deepening distrust:

"Where'd he go?"

She replied, "To Dr. McVeigh's church."

"To Sunday-school?"

"Yes; he went to the Sunday-school."

She watched him now furtively. She knew this knowledge would provoke him. Perhaps he would vent his anger on her: perhaps on Connie. She was in terror; more though for Connie than for herself.

"And you encourage this 'Psalm-Psaltery' business! You're a sweet-savored saintly pair now; aren't you?" Then with a determined oath:

"I'm going to stop this twaddle." As a hint of the way in which he proposed, preparatively, to interrupt this "Hymn and Sabbath peccancy," and affecting, by way of further suggestion, a mocking tone of nasal exhortion, he insinuated hypothetically,

"Suppose now I stay at home next Sunday, and *preach you both* a sermon myself?"

"*Connie promised*," she explained in a beseeching

tone, hoping she might move him, "Connie promised Mrs. Clifford that he would 'come again' next Sunday."

"Well, he won't."

"Cluff——"

"I say he *won't*."

"Why not allow him *that* comfort?"

"Because you're making a fool of him; and yourself too, for that matter. Don't I see the result?" with an air of finality which sat down decidedly on all such "puddling frippery." "Snivelling now, and talking a lot of swash about deception, dishonorable callings, and going West to hang out as a reformed—I don't know what. Rot me if I want to know what!"

"But he promised her, Cluff." This in grieved protest.

"Well!" angrily, "I'll 'promise her Cluff' now, that he don't go again. Who is this Mrs. Clifford?"

"She's Mr. Harrington's daughter. He has been in this very house to see poor sick people. He is a good man, and—— Cluff, you must not prevent Connie's keeping his word."

"If—you—let—him—*go*," now with a grim determined menace, "I'll mark you; yes; and in a way you'll remember for more than one Sunday. And it won't be with a 'Seal of the Spirit.' It'll be with the seal of my fist. I tell you, you're both getting religion-mad. I won't stand such grubbage."

The more he revolved the matter, the more he realized a threatened interruption, (possibly with dangerous results,) to his lucrative laziness, if this later influence be not counter-weighed.

She was silent.

Changing the subject to another ground of complaint,

he went on: "You won't use that baby as I proposed. Look here," threateningly, "I'm getting out of patience, and you daren't push me too far. Isn't that kid in condition now? I want it to show up sick in this business; and then," prefixing another profane imprecation, "with you in bed, and a sick lolly lying along-side, we can make no end of hauls. It'll never be less than a 'tenner' then, where it's a 'five' now. Are you always going to squeamish against this?"

She looked up at him reproachfully.

"You're just playing with a devil; now you be warned: you are. It isn't going to hurt the child in the end. It'll pick up fast enough when we're done with it."

And yet she was silent. She had her thoughts: possibly her vague resolves. It would have been idle, yes, reckless, for her to have communicated them to him.

He glowered now with a more dangerous umbrage. In his mind he referred this reluctant humor, this newly born scrupulosity, to Connie's influence. Returning to him he denounced hotly, "That whelp of a boy seems to be raising hell with my affairs! Is this to go on? Come? Spit it out. Balk me if you dare."

Pushed finally to make answer, she roused herself. With an effort to avoid where she would not promise, and catching too at an opportunity, as she hoped, to carry out a long obstructed purpose, she besought with anxious zeal,

"Let me send Connie away."

"No: I want him. He's got just the mealy kind of a face to bring us money; so long," he qualified, "as *he shoots his mouth* right. But——"

Here he paused, diverted and perplexed, as the

with the sudden remembrance of some startling coincidence. "Why, wasn't it this very Harrington that sent us five dollars by the boy, about two months ago?"

She made no answer.

Thinking a moment further, and growing more excited, he continued in exclamation,

"And now you, a-lettin' him go to church; meeting this man's daughter, an' makin' a free way for her to come here; perhaps with her father, by and by, unexpected like!"

He got up and walked the floor, chafing restlessly. Again resuming, and now with a visible rising of fear;

"I'm sure I've read something lately about this Harrington's being with investigating committees; perhaps with this Charity Society. I don't like their prying ways. Perhaps I put my foot in it when I sent the boy there with some letter. I must look over my list."

He paused again for a moment, wrestling in deeper mental retrospect. Suddenly he exclaimed, and now vehemently, as though some other coincident of recollection had unexpectedly confirmed him, "By——! I believe I *do* know—now."

Stopping in his walk and approaching the bed, his whole bearing manifesting increased excitement, he charged, "If you go on with this Sunday-school folly, you'll cook a hell of a mess for us. *Do* you hear?"

He had raised his voice, for she was avoiding him. She turned her face away.

"Don't you know, you fool of a bungler, you're mixing something—something hot? Next we know this woman'll *pump the boy*. And then his clapper'll draw *Nice little development!*"

"I tell you," he went on, now thoroughly awakened to the extent of danger threatened, "this church bosh must wind up, or by the horned Satan, I'll wind you and the boy up!"

He stood threateningly over her, undetermined, even yet, as to what was best to be done. She shrank as far as possible from him, supporting herself upon one arm. The other she raised as if to protect her face. Her limbs hung over the side of the bed. He had approached close to her, and his body pressed hard against them. Thus she was pinned fast, and could not well avoid him.

She waited anxiously for his mood to change.

With ten dollars so recently in his hands, the product of her misleading wit, he was not predisposed to quarrel. In truth, just then, he was amicably disposed: only that his fears admonished him. Could he have decided that a thorough beating was an effectual way to settle this uncertainty, he would have wound himself up to the required pitch and administered it to her in round measure; following, if he thought it necessary, with Connie afterwards. But, all things considered, he doubted the expediency of this: therefore, the whim for the moment not inciting, he remained irresolute.

She noted his indecision. Her arm dropped its guard. Wishing to allay his fears, also to cajole and mollify his wrath, she ventured, as a reminder, "You have cautioned him not to talk."

"I know that; but I don't trust him: leastwise not for long, out of my sight."

"Then," she again urged, "do let me send him *away.*"

"*Don't I tell* you his sanctimonious face wins for us.

He can slather them in by the half-dozen, so long as he just sticks to the story I've fixed for him."

Again he was silent and reflective. She ventured once more: "Oh, I wish that you *would* heed me, and send the boy away."

It was like the appeal of Moses; and yet, Pharaoh-like, and for a similar reason, he held on to the lad. Perhaps also, as with Pharaoh, there is to come a time when this blind obstinacy of avarice will be instrumental in whelming him in discomfiture. We cannot tell. That time is not, yet.

Burle was not intelligently cautious here. He provoked and impulsed in this woman, a more positive longing for release, by tampering with and abusing her boy; by disparaging and disregarding a mother's love for her child. He should have realized that to intensify a rightful desire by denial, is to precipitate final revolt. But he looked upon her continued adherence as a fixed condition, not liable to interruption from any cause. What, on earth, reasoned he, had she, aside from him!

Poor woman! Very little: possibly nothing.

Gauged by the verdict of society, she was without the pale of social recognition. For fourteen years she had continued her unsanctioned relationship with this man. Her own had disowned her. She had been a participant in crime with a swindler. She had been one with him in plots and plunderings; and that, to an extent which would appear forever now to bar her return to rectitude, willed she never so earnestly to turn the leaf on the past, and live once more an upright life.

Withal, she was naturally a woman of noble parts. Deep down, covered *now, it is* true, by the rubbish of *past misdeeds, there was yet* something worth saving.

Possibly the excess of that unreasoning and brutal treatment which we deplore, pressed now more determinedly than ever like a bitter cup to her lips, may, like the trial by furnace, in the end purge away the dross which covers, and eliminate that sparkle of worth from the blackness of her past life.

Verily, the struggle goeth on!

With Burle, just now, the exasperating irritant appears to be a nettlesome cross-purpose, incident upon Jane's persistent secret confederacy with Connie, whereby the child was supported and encouraged in his tangent avoidance of those crooked ways into which his corrupt monitor sought to educate him. All this was especially aggravated by her incessant importunings to send him away. The whole attitude of her life was, "Do what you will with me; but—let—the boy—*go*."

Nevertheless he had said, again and again, "The boy shall not go." Again and again she had dared to gainsay. He resented this importunate opposition; characterizing it as a diverting querulous humor, that furthered with but half a heart the plans which he had spent so much time in arranging.

And this man had plans: systematized methods. In the next room, and arranged for easy command, was a very complete Register Bureau. He had been at great pains to compile it. There was not, either in New York or Brooklyn, an Annual Report of a benevolent institution, cataloguing the names of wealthy donors, which he did not possess. He had also epitomized incidents, noted down individual peculiarities and propensities whereby he might, in each respective case, be *the better guided* in his scheming manipulations of *these people*. All this, with their business callings

and resident addresses, he had carefully arranged for expeditious reference: for a methodical old spider was he.

But now—what!

A cloud appears upon the horizon of his hitherto well concerted contrivances. It threatens a wet blanket to his carefully laid trains of fictitious orbation.

All these irritating oppositions, these threatened disruptions, he now ponders resentfully, and his mien is becoming dangerous. We know the explosive character of his temperament. His devilish moods burst, oftentimes in a moment; and like cyclones, they whirl him beyond the caution of self-control.

His companion sat upon the bedside, Burle pressing against her knees. He stood therefore in such a way as pinioned her before him. She had dropped her arm, leaned back upon one elbow, and her face was upturned to his while she waited anxiously the determination of his humor. Her last words were still in his ears: "Heed me, and send the boy away." He muttered in wrath to himself, not in the words here given, because with profane interlardations, but something in substance to this effect: "Rank opposition to all my wishes: the breaking up of all my laboriously contrived purposes." His thoughts were busy; and indeed now, very dangerously busy.

Perhaps, in addition to her other contrarieties, she meditates my betrayal; to the officers; for swindling: procuring charity under false pretenses: abduction.

At these suppositive possibilities his coward heart gave a sinking start. Then the recovered pulse brought an added flush of animosity. To what else, if not exposure, he argued *with* determined resentment, can such *oppugnant freaks tend?*

In that quiet room, with only a defenceless woman before him, his wrath was aggravated by his fears; and both together pricked him to the verge of exploding rage. Like a cur, whose easy comfort is threatened, he snarled before he snapped. No simile can better typify his bearing at this moment toward the unfortunate creature before him. His teeth, close set, and his lips strained laterally, showed a whole double row of fangs.

She noted the change. Her eyes became fixed to his face with the fascination of a terrible dread. With sinking alarm she strained warily to free her limbs.

It was an unfortunate movement. It roused him, as a tiger might be recalled to ferocity by the motion of mutilated prey under his claws. He turned upon her with savage viciousness, and indeed there was now no longer any thought of discretion.

Unhappy woman! The lashing simoon is whirling toward her. In another moment its cutting sand whips will bruise and blacken her shrinking flesh.

With one hand he cruelly clutched her hair. Simultaneously with the other he caught her about the throat. The fierce pressure of his body against her limbs pinned her fast, and she was detained powerless, defenceless; a prey to the insane sway of his unreasoning and now furiously kindling resentment.

She grasped his arm, his wrist, with both her own hands. She tugged, now with an open despairing energy, to release her throat. She could utter no sound: she was strangling. She redoubled her struggles; but his clutch tightened.

Desperation gives desperate strength. At last she *had* almost freed her limbs, when, lest she escape, he *suddenly changed* the method of his infuriated assault,

and jerked her violently forward upon her feet into the middle of the room. Releasing now her throat in order to free his right hand, but with the other still clinched into her hair, he struck her with his doubled fist; full in the face: again; and yet again.

The blows were savagely, shockingly cruel.

She threw up her head, reeled back and turned partly around. Her impulse, dazed and bewildered, was to flee; but he yet held her by the hair.

For the fourth time, drawing back his clenched fist as she staggered uncertainly before him, he struck her: and this time with all the final cumulative madness of a maniac's strength.

The crushing stroke lighted upon her bare neck. It felled her to the floor.

He shook the fingers of his left hand free from the tangled strands of hair; and the head, released, struck heavily upon the floor.

With a convulsive movement, she turned: then her body lay motionless. No cry escaped her lips. Her face was hidden upon one arm, and the black folding masses of her glossy hair, disordered, flowed upon the floor about her.

CHAPTER VII.

ISABEL.

We take up now an antecedent narrative. We retrovert two months. In another sense however we advance, for we are carried from the environments of vice at Island Number Ten, *to the* purer atmosphere of a *genial home upon Clinton* Avenue.

It is pleasant to become acquainted with Mr. Crandall Harrington; a gentleman of endowments, mental and material. Wealth, though, in his estimation, was secondary. With him, mind took honorable precedence over matter. The latter was subordinate, as is the setting to the diamond.

"A very pleasing thing," he commented to his daughter Isabel, "to be able to enjoy a rich mounting, But, nevertheless, remember my dear,

> . . . . . whether
> In setting of gold, or an uncut treasure;
> A diamond is a diamond ever.
> In broadcloth capote, or an apron of leather;
> The wearer's desert don't depend on the vesture."

This gentleman was the senior and principal partner in a large manufacturing concern in Brooklyn, and during most of his married life he had lived upon Columbia Heights.

But many years ago he lost his wife. After that bereavement, the home to which as a bride he had taken her, remained under a cloud. Its surroundings could never be disassociated from the incident of her death. The sunshine that went when she was taken, seemed never to come back. Other considerations helping on the impulse, he had decided, a few years before the opening of this story, to build for his family a new residence on Clinton Avenue.

That his means were commensurate to his tastes, his perfectly and elegantly appointed establishment, with its varied and finished appurtenances, abundantly testified.

Of his family, the one who will most interest us is *his daughter Isabel.* Since her mother's death, excepting a short and sad interim during which she was

married, this daughter has been at the head of her father's domestic establishment. She was indeed its crown and queen.

When she accepted Henry Clifford in marriage, the young man was a junior partner in the firm of Harrington & Co. But the period of Isabel's matrimony was of short duration. While on his way to Bridgeport, a few months only after the marriage, the steamer upon which her husband had taken passage, collided in a fog with a sailing vessel; went down; and his life was lost in a common struggle with many others who met a like fate.

The only capital which young Clifford had brought into the copartnership was his talent and experience, acquired through many years of industrious application to business as a subordinate. The firm had recognized his worth in making him a junior partner. But his interest, and the income therefrom, terminated with his death.

Isabel therefore gladly acquiesced, when Mr. Harrington urged that she return to him; and once more she has assumed the domestic management of her father's city home.

Nearly two years now have passed since her husband's death, and that sudden cloud in her womanhood's opening life is passing under the horizon.

Then too, little Crissie, the dearest sunbeam! had brought new light and love. She will likewise claim a share of our interested regard: and indeed it will be given heartily, for she is a beautiful little creature. Some time over a year now, it is, since her Sunday morning advent: and be assured, her grandfather *laughingly comments*, she has not misimproved this *introductory life period*.

This father and daughter were especially devoted to each other. Their relations were mutually helpful. As we have related, Mr. Harrington had been a widower many years, and during that period, home cares had devolved upon his brave, self-reliant Isabel. He had come to lean much upon her. And she too, in a gentle and affectionate way, relied upon him: for to her he had taken the place of both mother and father. And thus daughter and father had grown into loving congeniality of tastes, and sweet companionship of mind pursuit. He opened to her the great world about them. He appraised her of the good to be found in it: of the evil also; for he realized that she should be forewarned. Ho told her of the fair and the false; the sunny and the sad. The imparting was in tender fatherly discretion, and the instruction was received with affectionate, daughterly appreciation.

After her return, with life so quickly shadowed, her father had been more than ever solicitous in his efforts to maintain their loving companionship. Warmly and with engaging appreciation she had responded; and now their hearts were even closer together.

After little Crissie's birth, the sunlight once more came back into Isabel's eyes, and the song to her heart. With the new love brought by the child, and the old love which her father had long given, she developed again that buoyant happiness, so charming in the Isabel of earlier remembrance.

It is after eight o'clock, in the dusk of a June evening, and Mr. Harrington, just returned from business, has this moment sent his carriage to the stable.

"Is baby awake?" This is his first inquiry of Lettv, *the nurse maid.* Very little past her first year's c

is it, but already has Miss Crissie set her heart decidedly upon her grandpapa. Her baby perceptions already advise her of his usual time of coming.

Yes, she is awake: is brought; and with clamorous prattle stretches out her arms to him.

Some one else follows closely after baby. Her mamma sometimes laughingly protests, "I declare, papa, you think first of the baby now! Awhile ago it was——"

But he laughs at the mother's rueful demurrer, as he takes the child, saying while he holds her high over his head, "Would you believe it! Miss Cristine Clifford, your amiable mamma is—jealous!"

"But, papa dear—" she would insist.

He laughs and interrupts again; still to the baby; "Jealous of her own dear little Crissie. Don't we think that she is just the least bit of a——"

But by this time baby has one little hand grasped into his whiskers; and in behalf of her neglected mamma she is punishing him.

"Baby! baby!" he objects. Then laughingly to his daughter, "Isabel, dear; do help me."

She was not backward, and caught the little white fist: "But say you love me—first;" she stipulated archly.

Her father looked affectionately into her eyes. Dark brown eyes they were, and brimming with love's measure for him. Baby dropped cosily into his left arm, while with his right he drew his daughter to him and stroked her lovely hair.

"Say 'I love you'?" he repeated mirthfully. "Well then, if you care so much for a declaration of that sort from *your clumsy* old father: You're a pretty *sweetheart; and I do* love you." He bent his head *and kissed her cheek.*

"*NO ONE* SHALL CALL MY PAPA HARRINGTON—'OLD,'" (Page 108.)

"'Old!'" she objected with warmth. "No one shall call my Papa Harrington 'old.'"

They had been standing in the wide hall. With a movement now toward the dining-room he answered cheerily, "True, my dear; the Expectancy Tables give me somewhat of a lease *yet*. Perhaps you won't forget then that I have a corresponding appetite."

Thus reminded, the mother rang for attendance, and then claimed little Crissie. Accepting a rocking-chair which her father now proffered in the dining-room, she cuddled the little one up close; murmuring gently to her, in a sweet little confidential "aside," "Do you know, precious Bud, that your grandpa is the dearest —strongest—'bestest'—'lovingest'——"

The conclusion was so softly whispered into baby's ear, that no one else could hear it; and the baby never told it.

She rocked gently; backward—forward—keeping time as she sang in low sweet tones to her child.

* * * * * *

Mr. Harrington's business was extensive, and at that season of the year it required his personal supervision. It was not always possible for him to conform to appointed home hours: accordingly it was understood that regularity of household habit should not wait upon his uncertain coming. The usual dinner hour had passed; but a very comforting and substantial moiety had been duly put aside, and being now served hot, the good gentleman seated himself.

Mrs. Clifford made a preparative movement to send little Crissie to the nursery, expecting to occupy her chair opposite as usual, and preside at the dinner service. *But her father* begged her, "Please don't disturb yourself. *I love—really, I prefer*, my dear, to see you there

with the baby in your arms. You both make a delightful domestic tableau."

She *was* a daughter to be proud of! A mother one might well love to study!

Strength; exquisite contour of head with graceful elegance of figure; loveliness of face, and healthfulness of color; these brief descriptions outlined her physical characteristics.

She was above woman's average height, but correspondingly symmetrical. Her carriage was noble. Every pose and movement was forceful; every attitude an unstudied grace. The enchanting periphery that described her form, might well have served his glorious model, when the sculptor carved the Greek "Ino."

Her abundant hair, light in color and strikingly in contrast with the dark brown lustrous eyes, was drawn back in simple mode, and gathered in a heavy coil low upon her neck. She was not a Cinderella; nevertheless, hand and foot showed lines of beauty and vigorous strength combined.

This amiable young woman's *physical* education had evidently received attention. Indeed she had been instructed in such exercises as pertain and appertain to gravitative and inert resistances. She was not unfamiliar with ash blades; nor had she been deterred by parallel bars. Best of all, she gloried in a horse.

Had some unforeseen exigency made it imperative, she laughingly asserted her ability to—"Shovel in a ton of coal; or improvise and apply splints to a broken limb."

Ineptitude, in no wise described her. She was a grand woman! A flesh and blood revival of the "Greek Huntress" type of feminine prowess.

Withal, she was a gentle creature; sweetly simple

and tender of heart; delicate and refined in sensibilities; accomplished, educated and cultured in mind. While she was an enchanting society companion with men of large mental endowment, she was quite as happy in meeting and adopting the mood and measure of a little child.

She loved Nature:

She worshipped—God.

For the methodical physical training spoken of, and which, in its development so superbly served a setting to the cultured gifts of her mind, she was especially indebted to the personal supervision, in practice, of an elder brother. This amiable young man had contended that girls had rights of muscle, as well as privileges of mind. He insisted that the exhilaration of joyous independence which attends confident strength of limb, was not the prerogative alone of boys. His sister, whose natural modicum of sense was equal to the departure, had zealously adopted these sensible ideas.

As there was present in that household, no simpering element of dependent conformity to usage, false or feeble, the brother and sister had their own way: and right royally had Isabel rewarded her brother's tutorial expectations.

They rowed in company; practised gymnastic exercises; drove, both in carriage and saddle, and walked long distances together. She humorously insisted on sharing his hunting expeditions in the Adirondacks. But he laughingly objected that the line must be drawn somewhere; and compromised by instructing her in pistol and rifle practice at home.

This was Edward: and she always spoke of him with *great affection* as her "first lover."

But as other years came, Edward loved elsewhere with

fonder and more enduring instinct; and she too, *thought* that she had learned the same holy lesson.

* * * * * *

Baby has gone—fast asleep. Her nurse was sent for.

"Come, Letty. C-a-r-e-f-u-l-l-y; the precious darling! Softly; dainty little pet!"

The mother relinquished her charge reluctantly, while Mr. Harrington, who had risen from the table, stood by, contemplative.

"Aren't you making a mistake, Isabel?"

Her face quickly asked how.

"I mean in rocking the child to sleep."

"Surely it doesn't injure baby?"

"Oh no! But is it not wearying to your arms? And will it not be difficult to interrupt the habit?"

She looked at her arms, pushing up the sleeves of her habit the better to discover them. Then she held them up before his eyes in playful suggestive negation.

"Yes;" he replied, answering the mute triumph in her eyes. "Thanks to Edward."

Round; fair, with just a tint of blush: but above all, they were royally capable in strength. "I think you are right;" he acknowledged. "They are indeed equal to the happy fatigue." Then he prompted, humorously,

"I wonder—if those arms——"

"Will reach 'round my dear papa's neck?"

She proved the affirmative of the matter at once; and lovingly too. Then looking into his face while further answering his cautionary suggestion she said,

"It is one of my sweetest pleasures; rocking baby. The dear heart! She knows that I have her, and she cuddles down *so contentedly* and cosily! Did you

ever hear the sleepy satisfied 'peep-peep' of the little chick, when it nestles under its mother's breast?"

Her eyes glistened and she continued: "I cannot bear to share my darling with the servants. I suppose that I must do so to some extent; but I do want, for my very own, all that I can get of that delicious fragrance which comes with the first bloom of an opening life. And she responds so lovingly! Sometimes, when I am alone, I grow hungry for her. Then straightway I send to the nursery, and you don't know how ardently she beams when I take her into my arms! How can a mother, preferring a lazy irresponsibility, bargain with a servant to monopolize the loving caresses of her child! No: I want my baby."

"You are a mother in a thousand;" he responded with a fugitive moisture in his eyes.

"Indeed?" she queried, looking up. "Well, I was glad to be a mother."

"I know it;" he answered; surreptitiously getting rid of the tear. "But alas, how few are like minded!"

"Why am I so different from others?" she asked softly.

"Very few," he replied, "are as well fitted to wrestle with the uncertainties of maternity. It is a question with too many of life or death." Here Mr. Harrington regarded his daughter tenderly; with, too, a touch of playful humor upon his face: "But don't you tempt me into a lecture, Isabel. I might make it too long. Not only the theme interests me, but in the present case, the *subject* of my——"

"Of course," she interrupted laughingly, anticipating him, "you should bestow your greater regard, in *this instance, on* the example in illustration. I should *quite insist on* that:" with the words she pressed

closer to her father and looked up into his face; "but for the present, my amiable papa, you must postpone this lecture, and dress for that musicale."

With an air of one reminded, Mr. Harrington acquiesced. He glanced at the mantel time-piece; "After nine; sure enough, dear. You will go with me, I hope? We haven't very much time to spare."

For answer she took his hand and drew him toward the hall. Through it they passed and together ascended the wide staircase.

As they reached the upper hall, the front door-bell sounded, and father and daughter turned into and seated themselves in a cosy sewing-room near the landing; waiting a moment on the ring just heard.

The maid brought a letter. Mrs. Clifford glanced at the superscription and gave the missive into her father's hand.

Noting the address he broke the envelope and hastily scanned a few lines. "Is anyone waiting?" he inquired, continuing still to read.

Mrs. Clifford questioned the maid; then replied: "A little boy brought the letter, and asks permission to wait an answer. He is now at the door below."

"Have him sit down in the hall, please. Say to Letty that we will call, shortly."

Letty went below with the message, and the merchant continued the perusal of the letter. Having read nearly down the first page he suddenly raised his head and commenced the delivery of a very emphatic exclamation:

"Well! I sw——"

His daughter softly but quickly pressed her hand over his mouth, *looking* a laughing reproof; "That *will do, my dear;*" *she* gently insisted with a most en-

chanting frown. "Let me tie your cravat. I'm sure you didn't really mean to say, any—such—naughty—word."

"Sounded very much that way;" he uncertainly confessed, under thoracic disadvantage, submitting meantime to the cravat process. Afterwards he sat quietly in meditation, as though he had forgotten the letter.

His daughter waited a few moments, and then there came over her face a gentle expression of concern; "Dear papa, are we not forgetting that little boy? Do read the letter."

Thus reminded, he seemed to draw a long breath of protest, and again gave it his attention; first however rising from his chair and then again assuming it in a position which was certainly one of comfort, though we cannot, we *may* not say, one of strict conventional precision. Such an attitude would, no doubt, transcend the privileges of drawing-room etiquette; nevertheless it was readily conceded by sensible Mrs. Clifford to her tired father, since they were cosily by themselves. He sat *astride* of his chair. This was very comfortable; and, considering his occupation, (the perusal of the letter,) convenient as well. Thus established, after a "fatigue" fashion dear to the heart of man, his arms restfully supported upon the chair's back, he resumed the perusal of the letter.

His sympathetic daughter, now stealing up behind, whispered, "Will you allow me? I know it must be some 'poor' case." Whereupon she leaned over him, resting her rosy arm upon his shoulder, and directed her eyes also upon the manuscript which her father held before him.

Perfect quiet for three quarters of a minute. Then *her eyes were looking* off the letter.

Another half minute.

"Papa, I must certainly get you some very large spectacles. *Then* won't you be a 'spectacle'!"

Mr. Harrington looked quickly up with quizzical surprise. His daughter had often said that she abominated puns. Now indeed she looked very guilty, and begged, laughing,

"Forgive me, papa: I don't know how—I didn't—It seemed as though I couldn't help it. It just '*popped*' out of itself. But I've been down the page a whole minute. Do turn the letter over."

The interest evidently increased, for there were no further interruptions.

Very soon they had both reached the end, and he tossed the letter upon a sewing table near by. No comment was made, and he mused meditatively.

She unclasped the arm which had crept about his neck and stole away from him. Tears were in her eyes. We may look at the letter now ourselves. It is in the next chapter. It has neither date nor special address; and in the event of failure of its purpose with Mr. Harrington, it can be re-enclosed, directed anew, and delivered to some one else.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LETTER AND THE LESSON.

"DEAR FRIEND:

I beg that you will please pardon me for intruding upon you at this time. I am compelled to seek kindly and timely aid at your providential hands. For some time past it has been a hard struggle to get along on account of my *husband's death and* the scarcity of work. As a consequence *very—very little* money comes in, and unpaid Gro-

cer's debts and RENT arrearages have well nigh disheartened me."

(2nd. page.)

"The cup of my mystery seems nearly full, and in my despair I must turn to you. My own condition is enfeebled—and I have no longer a dear husband to lean upon in my weakened state.

I earnestly pray that you will not turn a deaf ear to this my appeal. We are liable at any moment to be turned upon the street. The agent says that another party is ready to pay him for the rooms we have—and we must pay at once or go out. Oh, where should I go to. I have no money to move and pay the truckman, much less to pay in advance elsewhere.

Must we lose all and go at last to the Public Poor House. I beg of you come this once to my relief—The rent is only Five dollars—If this was paid, I could surely get along—and I have some money coming to me next week—for work which I have to finish before I can be paid.

Unless dear friends you can possibly kindly come to my relief, I know not what I shall do in this trying hour.

(3rd. page.)

"The future did seem to be getting brighter—and to hold a promising ray of hope—when this sudden demand came. I cannot meet it now—We are totally unprepared for it, for I am moneyless.

Unless I pay the man this evening he says he will serve papers to put me out early in the morning. In all kindness and earnestness I ask that you deal with me, a widow, and with my fatherless boy—who is young in this unhappy emergency as you would that others do to you when you pass from earth, and the keen heavy hand of adversity should be laid upon you, as it has so bitterly been upon the writer.

I send you my little boy. In this the hour of our greatest need and deepest distress I beg—I implore you to treat me gently, kindly, charitably—as it is proverbial with you—and as your heart dictates.

Respectfully and sadly
MRS. JANE STANHOPE
Cor. State & Furman."*

*Excepting some slight changes, a literal copy.

After conquering her tears, which she was timid about betraying, Mrs. Clifford ventured, with other tears yet in her voice,

"O papa! Isn't it very, very sad?"

"Yes, my dear, if it is true;" he replied guardedly.

A remonstrance was upon her lips. Mr. Harrington saw its expression in her face, and hastened to continue —same time swinging his chair around again to the approved position—"We of course cannot know that this letter contains the truth."

She came back and leaned against him, and he put his arm around her. "Neither do you know that it is untrue;" she argued. "Think of the poor woman's desolate loneliness!"

"Remember, dear father," she reminded in continuance, looking down at him, (and now she spoke so low that he listened with an effort to catch her words), "remember, dear father—that this distressed woman is —is a widow."

"True;" he thought to himself; and his arm pressed closer about his daughter. But he said nothing.

However, it was the thought of widowhood in the abstract, as a condition, which moved her, rather than the contemplation of her own loss of a husband. The letter prompted the reminder. Quickly putting herself in the writer's place, she was next considering with unquiet heart, the sadness and blight of such a prospective condition of wretched want, should she herself be thrown helpless upon the wide cold world; and too, with her little baby. Her father's strong arm about her was the reassurance that brought her back; and she again found expression in behalf of this widow *whose appeal had* brought the tears to her eyes.

"*Dear papa, will* you not send her something?"

Then with sweeter pleading yet, "Her child is under our roof, waiting."

"Isabel——" he commenced in reply; and his manner and tone apprised her of the substance of his thoughts: she knew that he was about to discourse what he called, "Common sense." Fearing then for the poor woman's cause she interrupted him protestingly,

"Oh, think of the strait this poor creature will be in, if relief does not reach her *to-night!*" And she seated herself upon her father's knee and looked beseechingly into his face.

"That's it;" he broke in with some warmth. "She takes me at a disadvantage. Here she comes—or sends—to make known her distresses at a quarter past nine in the evening. She gives me no chance to make inquiries. How do I know but that she is a-——"

"Fraud," he would have said; but his gentle daughter shrank from hearing the condemnatory designation. Before the term could escape, she caught it with her soft palm pressed against his lips, while at the same time her kiss on his forehead asked his forgiveness.

He took the hand gently away, retaining it firmly in one of his own.

"Ah now!" she laughingly exulted, sunshine returning, and merry frolic struggling for ascendency, and the tears yet wet upon her cheeks, "I have yet another;" and she held it aloft out of his reach.

Then, as demurely reconsidering, she surrendered both hands voluntarily into her father's. "Ah well!" as though her reconciliation to a hard necessity was in the effort, and with an acquiescing sigh, "You are such a reasonable papa! Aren't you now?" fixing *him roguishly with* her bright eyes. "And you talk so

much sense! Don't you now? And I *must* listen to you, mustn't I?"

Her face came closer, closer to his face; and her eyes, laughing their merry inquiries, came nearer, nearer to his eyes.

"Take both my hands; then I can't be naughty any more." And with this she nestled down into her favorite resting-place, bound to take hard sense, if she must, as comfortably as possible.

"What about your tongue?" he asked playfully; as if to stipulate also against other refractory membership.

"My tongue—is mum;" she pledged in droll measured monotone. Then, once more referring to her hands, "The naughty little gallery-boys are in a closet;" and she lifted them both, clasped firmly in her father's. "We can't reach the prisoners. We can only look at the cruel door. The sermon may go on."

Mr. Harrington hastened to take advantage of his daughter's receptive mood, and in reference to this application for assistance, went on to say,

"She may be good, and she may be bad. If she is a good woman, she ought not to apply to me, under conditions which suggest conclusions not in her favor."

Isabel motioned helplessly. Her father understood the dumb appeal to mean, "Why not in her favor?" He explained:

"She must know that I am not able to go out at *this* hour to look up her case; therefore, in thus timing her appeal, she says in effect, 'Send me money without knowing anything about me.'

"If she is in honest distress, she should not thus inferentially evade investigation. The coin of reward *which God would grant* me, when I divide a part o

my goods 'to feed the poor,' is the satisfaction of *knowing* that, through my instrumentality, a worthy needy case is rescued from suffering: not surmising or hoping that it is so. When, therefore, she asks under circumstances such as the present, she interposes an obstacle to God's purpose. If I give without knowledge, I am deprived of my reward. Indeed, in its place, a thorn is put in my pillow; for as a conscientious man, I cannot rest happy, realizing that possibly I have made maladministration of possessions lent me of God. This is the dilemma her letter puts me in. And furthermore, I am rendered unhappy, if in my uncertainty I turn her away with a denial. In short I have no means, if I act now, of knowing whether I am ministering to virtue, or offering an encouragement to vice.

"No; she should come at a time when I could avail of opportunity to prove her worthiness; and not, in effect, ask me to send my dollars out blindly, in her behalf."

Mrs. Clifford looked up. Two large interrogation marks were in her eyes.

"You may speak; but only a question, dear;" he stipulated.

"But I had two."

"Indeed! You are interested then. What is the first?"

"Would not the good Doctor McVeigh" (their pastor) "say that it is your duty to respond on all occasions, quickly, and leave the result with God?"

"Yes, dear; 'The good' Doctor Hugh McVeigh would say just those words. But not being responsible in my conscience to 'The good' Doctor McVeigh, I am not *permitted to forget* that God makes us all individual *conservators in behalf* of honesty and good morals;

and in me it would be a positive sin of omission, passively to acquiesce in conditions that may place added resources for the accomplishment of crime in the hands of my brother."

A second signal from the imprisoned party, and this time accompanied with a token of distress.

Mr. Harrington looked down on her roguishly. He was humorously elated in this one-sided advantage, and just a little disposed to neglect the appeal. But he relented.

"Well, dear," he acquiesced, "if it's the other question, we'll raise the interdiction to that extent."

Thus liberated, she hastened to protest: "I declare! You're as unapproachble in your argument as a clergyman in his pulpit. One may not say a word in reply."

"Only a question;" he reminded, smiling.

"This poor woman then; how can she know that she takes you at a disadvantage? Perhaps she has put off to the last moment, what, to her, is a terribly humiliating trial. And perhaps that last moment of possible endurance has but now come, and she is forced to act, even though the time be unseasonable."

"'Thrue fer ye there';" he admitted, quoting the nomenclature of Dennis, the coachman; "I do not forget the possibility of such a situation; and as a possibility it shall be considered in her favor; notwithstanding it's like the judge excusing the culprit for not knowing the law."

"But why speak of it as a 'possibility'?"

"Because, my dear—and I regret to say so—it is not a probability."

Still *her sympathetic* heart was not satisfied, as

plainly appeared from the look of disquiet in her eyes. Her father noted it and went on:

"Measured, my child, by such antecedent rules precedent, as the experience of organized societies has proven, I am sorry to say that four out of five of these 'late-at-night' applications have turned out—frauds. There, darling, the harsh word did escape me, though I——"

He did not complete his phrase, but looked down with half-smiling depreciation into his daughter's face. She was evidently yet in perplexed thought. Again he continued; now, as though commenting in soliloquy:

"It is a sad thing to want. Nevertheless, the misfortune once upon the sufferer, she should, if a stranger, accept the remedy upon conditions which, while they may not be as deferential as she might wish to her delicate reluctance, are yet the only ones under which assistance can safely be applied, not only so as to relieve her, but, if she is worthy, *protect* her as well. If we are influenced by her objection to this, we allow her, perhaps, to put a 'stumbling block' in the way of some other."

Isabel was listening, and with her air of acquiescent conviction, was coupled plainly one of regret. But she could recognize and admit a truth, though, like uncongenial companionship, it might not be what she would have preferred.

She was not mawkishly foolish. Though it pained her to realize that deception, like a hooded criminal, often obtruded to play a part, and, under the mask of distress, steal an advantage upon humanity's no*blest impulses, yet* she would not blindly ignore this

condition, simply for indulgence in unreasoning sentiment.

After a few moments of meditation she lifted her face to her father's again, as with a bright idea:

"How much would you send if you knew that she was truly needy and worthy?"

Mr. Harrington reflected: "Oh—well! Say, five dollars. She asks for that sum."

Isabel:—with an air of getting at the point: "And you say that only one out of five 'night applications' is apt to be honestly worthy?"

He assented, curious to know how she proposed to harmonize their perplexity.

Isabel:—having reached a happy conclusion, and, with a bright smile: "Then why not send her the one dollar out of the five?"

Her father:—touched withal at the ingenuousness as well as the ingenuity of the plea: "Dear heart!" Then after reflection he concluded,

"It shall be, this time then, as you wish, Isabel; although it is a compromise with a principle. But 'this once' we will again take the chance, and pray for forgiveness if we make a mistake. I think though, that we had better send the amount she asks for. If her story is true, one dollar would not relieve her embarrassment."

"But, dear papa," Isabel sought to stipulate, "if this turns out to be a f—— an unworthy appeal, you won't refer all the blame to me?"

"No," he answered; we will share the blame or the blessing together, while we venture one more"—kissing her—"risk of erring."

"Oh no!" she *insisted*; "not one, but three."

"What, three more risks!" But he was laughing, for well he knew what she meant.

"'There's luck in odd numbers'," she sought to explain, "and I don't want my intercession to prove an untimely one."

And so her father kissed her twice again, questioning archly, "Wasn't '*one*' an odd number?"

"Oh yes; but 'one' is so lonely! Don't you love to kiss your naughty girl?"

She was straightway reassured, and fully satisfied that there existed no such calamatous possibility.

Mr. Harrington was one of the Board of Managers of The Society of Organized Charity. He made a note among his next day's memoranda of duties, saying as he wrote, "Early to-morrow I must drive down to the Society's office and ask about this case. Yes," referring to the letter, "she *has* given her name and address." Then, reassuringly to his daughter, "If she proves worthy, she may need further assistance."

He called the nurse maid. Handing her a bright new "five," he instructed, "Give it to the little boy who is waiting, and tell him to take it to his mother."

Isabel interrupted any further discourse, hurriedly exclaiming, "That recital! If we linger to talk longer, it will be too late for us to go."

In accordance with his intention expressed, Mr. Harrington called the following morning at the headquarters of the Society. A surprise was waiting. But, concerning the startling history of this mysterious beggar, we have already anticipated what then was made known to him, concerning the artifices and practices of the wily—"Colonel" Burle.

CHAPTER IX.

"THAT RECITAL." A STARTLING ARRAIGNMENT.

Loose Philanthropy. This report thereof not intended in any sense as a discourteous reflection, but presented simply as verity: not exemplifying a class, but an exception.

SANFORD CREDULO was a man of wealth, whose charitable impulses often led him into loose benevolent projects. Abundant success in business had mellowed him. His heart was large, and it decidedly dominated his judgment; sometimes—ofttimes indeed—to the injury of recipients.

Not that such a characteristic and such a result are necessarily coupled. They are not. But when a careless generosity holds a rich man's purse strings, he proves, sometimes, a doubtful friend to those whom he would benefit.

Mr. Credulo lived upon Clinton Avenue, and he was a near neighbor to Mr. Harrington. He had no children. Together with his wife, he attended the Reverend Hugh McVeigh's church. They were upon a familiar acquaintance-footing with their pastor, who drew with freedom upon Mr. Credulo's willing resources, on every humanitary prompting.

Mr. Credulo carried his sixty years, and his two hundred and sixty pounds, with that jolly-heartedness which naturally accords with success, good health, good humor and regular habits. The constant expression of his face was an asking one; but not in th

sense of personal receptivity. His very high, rather expansive forehead, brows that arched and were noticeably distant from small good natured blue eyes, these joined expression with his narrow nose and large mouth in importuning the community continually, "What can I do for you?" His ruddy cheeks, shaking jocosely, helped on the invitation, "Don't be backward to ask it, if you want anything."

The physique of this man was remarkably in contrast with the figure of his pastor. Dr. McVeigh's body was spare and tall. The broad and ample church edifice typified the hearer, and the long spire his pastor. The parallel might be elaborated; for the preacher was inclined to be high and distant, while the good parishioner had a sympathetic ear, and his door was wide open for all.

The Reverend Hugh McVeigh, wherever he went, conveyed in his air an expression of unyielding adherence to old usages. He was a conformist with the past. "Do this because precedential ages have done it." He never got far enough above the crust of those ages to inquire whether, in view of an advance of the present over that past, some other way was not more desirable. He was sixty-five years old, and he inculcated exactly the same doctrinal tenets which distinguished the theologian of forty years antecedent.

If objections to this were raised, he sententiously put them aside with, "The Bible has not changed."

He did not comprehend that the world had changed. He never considered that a later light, new needs and conditions, with supervening and evolving developments, *might* point the necessity to shade or modify *earlier biblical* interpretations.

In respect to benevolent appropriations, could he

have obtained a knowledge of the amount which Cornelius of Cesarea devoted to alms, he would have duplicated it—exactly.

Such was the vicar, who, to very great extent, dispensed the vicarious benevolence of Sanford Credulo. His salary was eight thousand dollars, and his home was upon an avenue in the near vicinity.

As both these men are characters in this story, we have thought it necessary thus briefly to summarize their leading characteristics. We shall, incidentally, learn further concerning their methods and opinions.

Both had been invited to the musical recital, which, as we learned in the preceding chapter, Mr. Harrington also purposed attending with his daughter Isabel.

Another invited guest claims mention at this point, to the intelligent understanding of an interesting rencounter which took place during an interval in the music: Dr. Walter Jourdan.

To avoid confusion between physic and metaphysics, we shall deferentially refer to the "D. D." as "Doctor." The "M. D." will be satisfied with "D-r."

By such a mode we shall escape ambiguity, and, same time, gratify this reverend's punctilio. Neither shall we make an enemy by an abbreviation; for Dr. Jourdan is careless about prefixes. He is not a man of either suffixion or sufflation; but one who solidly strikes independent blows, wherever he thinks that the wedge is dividing a living necessity from a dead antequation.

These three, the man of medicine, the man of money and the morosoph, formed a remarkable nominative possessive and objective triangle of dissimilitude, as concerned *their convictions* respecting the wisest economy of *Relief.*

Dr. Jourdan contended for a relation which made alms-giving, subject and responsible.

Mr. Credulo did not oppose methodical inquiry; neither did he interest himself in it. His, rather, was an extravagant and demoralizing give-all-they-want policy. He was for abundantly *possessing* the poor at his door, *sans façon*, with whatever they asked for.

But the third corner of this triangle coldly objected to modern methods of investigation. He characterized preliminary inquiry as an irreverent impertinence; an objectionable unchristian assumption of vicegerent inquisition touching the necessities of God's wards.

Such a triangle cannot revolve in society without commotion. The corners find contact. The shocks attendant upon this motion will only decrease, as the attrition of progress gradually wears ancient angularities into curves of comformity.

* * * * * *

A quarter-hour intermission had occurred in the music, and a knot of guests joined conversation in the library: among them, the Doctor and the D-r. These latter two became engaged in an animated discussion. Mr. Credulo stood by, evidently in sympathy with Doctor McVeigh. Other guests were drawn to an audience of this disputation between the clergyman and the well-known medical practitioner; and among them, Mr. Harrington and his daughter Isabel.

Doctor McVeigh was the assailant.

He "had heard" of Dr. Jourdan's views touching obligatory discrimination in charity bestowals, and he looked upon such "notions" as "superlunary." He regarded the young man's declaration of principles as a *presuming* divergence from old-established interpretations of alms-giving obligations: as an effort to substi-

tute a cramped hypercritical red-tape system, for a spontaneous efflative sentiment. He would call this young dissenter to account; and so he did, in language of arraignment very positive for a drawing-room.

Isabel was drawn to the controversy because she wanted light. Her heart naturally sided with Doctor McVeigh, upon what she thought to be the broad and liberal side. Yet at the same time her reason compelled consideration of the later methods, as favored by her father. She only wanted to be confirmed respecting what was best for the poor people themselves.

Doctor McVeigh, without any preconcerted arrangement of occasion, matter or method, in his challenge; rather, as would appear, in a casual way, notwithstanding with definite purpose, had proposed:

"Doctor Jourdan, I hear report of you as an ultraist in a new departure. I am told that you would revise the sixth chapter of St. Matthew."

"I think then," pleasantly responded the D-r, "that some one has been traducing me." But he understood the Doctor's meaning; nor was he backward to accept discussion upon the point he knew intended; but not however upon grounds of vague generality; therefore he inquired,

"In what particular am I charged as a dissenter from the teachings of St. Matthew?"

The Doctor caught and doubled up his lower lip with forefinger and thumb, wrinkled his forehead and brought the line of severe regard in his eyes to bear on this disturber of old-time acceptances: then he answered severely,

"I refer to the third verse. They tell me that you would deputize *all* alms-giving to incorporated institutions. *Well, to some very* considerable extent;"

the Doctor hastened to qualify, having noted a partial disclaimer in Dr. Jourdan's face.

With an air of heavy dignity, he continued, "Now it appears to me, that one could not, 'in doing his alms,' more effectually bulletin to the world what '*his right hand*,' was doing, than by putting his name into some catalogue, as a one-hundred-dollar subscriber to the public charity which it represented."

Thus the Reverend: and he decided in his mind that the sally was a telling one. Dr. Jourdan quietly countervailed it, and demolished all apparent advantage by asking in return,

"What if he subscribed as 'Cash'?"

This was an upset, of course: but the clergyman was rallying from it, when Dr. Jourdan continued, "I should think it however more manly to avow one's name with such a subscription; not only as an assertion of reliant independence, but also in conformity with the teachings of the fifth chapter of the same Gospel."

Doctor McVeigh "fished" for a chance advantage. He asked, "What part of the fifth chapter?"

"I refer," replied the D-r, "to the sixteenth verse:

"'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works——'."

Thus the first encounter; and the Doctor grew less confident and more wary. This young man developed proportions as an antagonist. Evidently, too, he had read his Bible, and was prepared to contend with unsupported assertion, or dictatorial pronunciamento, by opposing embarrassing facts: a more rigorous forensic method.

Isabel had watched with her eyes and eagerly attended *with* her ears. She knew Dr. Jourdan only as

one casually introduced. She had never conversed with the young man; but she had been long enough on "The Hill," as the locality was known, to have heard him generally spoken of as an able young medical practitioner. She rather wondered however at the confident assurance evinced in his readiness to enter a contest with ministerial dignity. Doctor McVeigh, to her, represented a semblance to infallibility.

She looked up into her father's face as though to interpret to herself where *his* sympathies might lie. Then she reflected, "I'll warrant though, he is with the young Doctor." This conclusion was helped from expressions of disapprobation which she had often heard from Mr. Harrington, respecting what he styled, "Doctor McVeigh's 'promiscuous charity'." Meantime the clergyman had gathered again.

"I object," he essayed, "to any methods that contravene the spirit of the command found in the third verse of the next, the sixth chapter of St. Matthew. Christ enjoins there pointedly,

"'But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.'

Now young man," he will pin him this time, "when a eedy brother, careworn, footsore and hungry, appeals t my door for help, do you think that I comply with e injunction in the passage just quoted, when I say to m, 'I won't help you here: I don't know you: but u will take this card to The Society of Organized arity. I have put my alms-money there: I have t them my check. If you are found worthy, they l use such part of this deposit as may be necessary ford you the required relief.' Now I contend that,

in saying this, I make such publication of my alms, as positively dishonors the command,

"'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth,'

not going so far now as to consider also the hardship imposed upon the applicant by the delay."

Isabel turned her large brown eyes, so full of sympathy for that poor man, who had thus been pictured as standing with dejected air upon a stranger's door-step, and she seemed to appeal to Dr. Jourdan in the words, "Ah yes! What could be more naturally in compliance with heart-impulse, more intelligently in conformity with Scriptural precept, than immediate personal bestowal of relief?"

Dr. Jourdan met that entreating look. It was the first time that their eyes had ever positively encountered. He never afterwards forgot her eager attitude; its tremulous uncertainty of mien respecting his probable response; the quivering suspense of lip; the silent appeal of those glorious eyes, half-moistened with luminous pity: and too, so directly and frankly seeking his, without reservation, and as though she would urge, "Surely, sir, you have a kind heart! You would not postpone this poor creature's necessities to the issue of a formal investigation!"

He felt a moisture start to his forehead; and though he had never spoken directly with this woman, never before especially regarded her, there now impulsed through him, a quick-beating desire to justify himself, as to some one nearer than a common acquaintance. He was even nervously eager to correct her misjudgment, in so far as he imagined it might bear upon himself.

Others there were, too, who curiously and even anxiously awaited his answer. He replied,

"I am aware that the meaning usually attributed to this passage is, 'Give at once without formality. Make no report of your giving, nor ask questions of the petitioner. Do not halt with exactitude to count the sum of your beneficence. It is an oblation to God. Do not measure it, for God measures not His mercies to you. Hide even your eyes from too inquisitive regard of the applicant, while you extend to him your offering'."

Then he paused as if to inquire, "Have I withheld any advantage? Have I not stated fairly?"

Isabel's heart fluttered. An undefined, unacknowledged something certainly influenced between them. She thought to herself, "Surely he is reading my understanding of our duty; but," she further continued, reflecting to herself and with sympathy for Dr. Jourdan, "is he not putting the case strongly against himself. He is the more entrenching the Doctor."

Woman's instinct! It always turns with helpful will to the one hardest pressed; notwithstanding she then thought that his position was wrong. But the young disputant proved himself quite equal to this emergency. He continued,

"I think that a simple interpretation of this verse is illogically expanded when it is sought to attach to it a prohibition against intelligent investigation. It contains no such interdiction. It is an old rule of law, that the whole of a statute shall be considered, in the interpretation of any one part. This is certainly a proper guide in the consideration of Sacred as well as Civil Law. Now what is the *context?*"

He paused a moment, hesitated, and a faint disconcerting flush came to his face. Isabel was

watching him, and her feminine instinct—oh, what a gentle and tenderly regardful intuition is a woman's! —divined the cause of his embarrassment. She hastened away. Almost immediately returning, she silently placed a Bible in his hands. A simple act as respects outward exercise only; but it touched him. He bowed in receiving the book and thanked her in a cordial expressive tone. Then he opened to the sixth chapter of St. Matthew and continued,

"I will read the verse just referred to. Please remember that it is the third, as they follow in order, and that its meaning may be modified by others which have preceded.

"'But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:'

"It is, as we all know, from Christ's sermon on the Mount. Great multitudes had assembled to hear him. But let me go back now and read from the *first* verse of this same chapter, for it is in the first verse that Christ introduces the subject. He follows up its consideration in the second, and gives a conclusion in the third verse.

"'Take heed that ye do not your alms before men *to be seen of them*:'

"and next from the second verse:

"'*Therefore*, when thou doest thine alms, *do not sound a trumpet before thee*, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they *may have glory of men*.'

"And now finally, in the light of meaning which this introductory context prefaces, I read again the *third verse*, which you have quoted. It is a part of the *three and should* not be separated from them. It is the

conclusion of the matter after a statement of antecedent conditions:

"'BUT, when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:'

"Now," turning to Doctor McVeigh, "you cite this last passage as an authority for omitting preliminary inquiry; and you allege as an inferential reason, gathered from the text, the semi-publicity to the applicant's needs involved by investigation: and you recite this same passage of Scripture, as your warrant for bestowing an immediate silent gratuity; notwithstanding, in most cases, it must necessarily be given without any certification of the actual necessities of the applicant?"

"I don't object," complied the Doctor, smiling, "with your statement of my position."

"Very well then;" agreed Dr. Jourdan. "Now, if I may be permitted, let me give you my understanding. I can see no warrant for such an interpretation. I submit that it is a popular perversion. That this perversion is the result of a quotation of the third verse *singly*, and without the preceding explanatory context. If I pursue a strict analysis of your deduction, it is this: That because hypocrites made an ostentatious advertisement of their alms, therefore the worthiness of beneficiaries should not be inquired into. There is certainly no legitimate or reasonable connection between such a premise and such an inference. Then surely such an illogical deduction was not Christ's lesson, as a conclusion upon the conditions related by Him in the first two verses.

"*The meaning of Christ*, as fairly construed by a *leration of the* three passages, obviously con-

HIS WORDS SEEMED POINTED WITH THE LIGHT AND GLOW OF TRUTH. (Page 137.)

nected by conjunctions, was, 'Make no *public boast* of your charities.' Do not "*trumpet*" them abroad. Do not seek to make, as do the hypocrites, personal capital out of your deeds of benevolence.' The three verses contain no sum of meaning, mandatory as to the observance of *secret* charity, nor *prohibitory* as respects prior certification of worthiness.

"Notwithstanding, good intentioned people, with the last verse only in mind, have referred to it in their consciences as an authority for blind indiscriminate giving; thus making Christ say that we should disburse relief with our eyes shut; that investigation was an impertinent affront to Deity, and that the exercise of an intelligent discretion in alms-giving, was the usurpation of a Divine prerogative.

"I think that if the all-loving Christ was now upon earth, He would rebuke such a one-third interpretation; indeed I may say, such a *perversion* of His utterance. I know he would assure us, rather, that alms-giving was never so sweet, never so tenderly regardful of the best interests and the most urgent intelligent necessities of our fellow brother, as when administered *with the greatest wisdom.*"

His face glowed. Turning to include the eager listening group about him, he concluded:

"It is a libel on Divinity to say that blind charity is sanctioned by Holy Writ. The hand that gives without knowing of the positiveness of the need, tempts to crime just to the extent that, in the absence of a necessity, it encourages an asking."

His words seemed pointed with the light and glow of *truth.* The earnestness of his own belief urged *responsive acquiescence* in the minds of those about him. *His, seemed* that boldness of utterance which is bui

only upon the positiveness of a conclusion, after patient legitimate deduction from acknowledged premises.

Isabel's heart throbbed under the magnetism of his address. She was conscious of a misty obtrusion in her eyes, for his splendid figure grew uncertain before her. She could not withhold her sympathy, and her conviction was following.

He entranced her too, as a great orator holds in the fascinating charm of a magnetic influence, all hearers about him. But he had not spoken boisterously. In neither demeanor or tone had he offended the courtesies or transgressed the amenities of a drawing-room. The whole was, rather, an example of the power reflected by individual conviction in the speaker; this coupled with logic and a quiet intensity of manner and utterance.

Her father drew a long breath which plainly said to Isabel, "I'm glad I'm here. I'm glad I've heard what I have. I'm glad to be so ably confirmed in what I've haltingly believed for a long time." And his daughter looked up and said to him softly,

"I think, papa, you've found an ally."

CHAPTER X.

"THE INDICTMENT SUSTAINED."

But this was not the conclusion of the controversy. By far the most interesting part was yet to come. The good Doctor was not convicted or convinced. He returned to the assault with much spirit.

"I *cannot approve*," *he said*, "of any method which *involves either publicity* or community of effort in the *of charity espionage*. I think that the spirit of

Christ's injunction was that we should bestow our alms in secret, 'and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly'."

"Do you still maintain," interrogated Dr. Jourdan in response, "that the Bible sanctions unintelligent giving; disbursing to strangers without inquiry?"

"I understand that, if God sends to me a man asking alms, I am not to question his need. *My duty is performed* when I respond to his application."

"Is such a course always true charity to our brother?"

"I think 'such a course' is 'charity' in its largest sense."

"Do you regard 'charity' and 'alms' as synonymous terms?"

"I have thus considered them. They are generally so accepted in text relating to the relief of the poor."

"How then," now asked Dr. Jourdan, "do you interpret the passage,

"'Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing'?"

The clerical expounder was nonplussed. He paused in some confusion of meditation; but before he had gathered for answer, Dr. Jourdan continued, giving his own interpretation:

"I think that no alms-giving is true charity, which bestows without an intelligent certainty that the bestowal will be a benefit. An interpretation that sanctions indiscriminate response on all occasions, upon the premise that the poor are God's wards, and that He alone sends them, and that they alone are sent, is a *dangerous one*. There are many who fraudulently *simulate this* wardship, and the Devil sends them.

When we give to such, we pander to the vice of deceit; and to the extent of our giving, we confirm them in a sinful fraud. This is not true charity to a brother, yielding to an evil temptation. Though we 'bestow' all our goods on such, with the sincerest passive hoping, it 'profiteth us nothing'."

This controversy was becoming formidable. This young man not only willingly met the Reverend Doctor; more annoying still, he had the temerity, and the evident ability, to assume the aggressive.

Most disconcerting of all: the movement in the little circle gathered about, plainly evidenced sympathy in what the young physician had said. This oppositive concurrence disturbed the pastor. His prestige was threatened. He realized that he could not successfully oppose the sentiment last pronounced; and with a view to assault from new and possibly better vantage ground, he recited, after a word or two of preface, a very old and oft-repeated declaration of principles:

"Even granting," he admitted, "that one does sometimes, at the door, bestow to unworthy applicants, 'I had rather give to nine unworthy, than defer or turn one deserving petitioner from my threshold'."

To this, Dr. Jourdan proposed in rejoinder, "Will you allow me to give you a business man's interpretation of this code?"

"What is *your* interpretation?" rather crustily responded the Doctor.

"Not *my* interpretation," disclaimed the young man, "but a common sense rigid parallel, which startlingly reveals the impolicy of this long-time dignified fallacy. As a precept it ought no longer to receive respect. It is this: 'I *had rather give* nine dollars to vice, than

fail of an opportunity to give one dollar in benefit of virtue.'"

Doctor McVeigh's face showed disapprobation. "This is an *uncharitable* construction of the charity of another."

"Then," suggested Dr. Jourdan with the faintest color of humor, "will you please to give me the *charitable* construction?"

Neither was this pleasing to the Reverend disputant. It was not agreeable to have it implied that an excusing or tolerant construction was necessary to his canons. The good man had been so unexpectedly unseated in this tilt of his own seeking that his self-complacency was bruised. However, figuratively he rubbed his sore spots and again essayed:

"Well, I will put it in this way: 'I would rather give to nine petitioners who *did not need* help, than turn one away who did.'"

Isabel was leaning on her father's arm. He pressed her hand, and turning to her said in an animated undertone, "Just what I have often heard good people say. I wonder how, this time, will he answer the Doctor?"

Isabel could only whisper, "Listen; he is already replying;" as the young man began in his turn,

"If the nine 'did not need help,' then you have been a passive instrumentality, whereby they have succeeded in a wrong. Now what is the effect upon these nine who have thus practised an artifice upon you? Are they better for it, or are they worse?"

"Of course," reluctantly admitted the Doctor, "they are not benefited."

Dr. Jourdan; pressing the point still further: "Are *they not, in* proportion *to the* success of their dishonest

intrigue, certified in their swindling practices? And are not you, in proportion as you passively contribute to what, actively you might have prevented, co-responsible for these frauds?"

The Doctor replied, "I don't like the way in which you put it. It is an offensive way."

Mr. Harrington's face began to glow. He grew restless under the restraint of silence, longing to join the debate. The young man enunciated his own convictions exactly. He was prompted to second him actively. He had talked on this subject himself with Doctor McVeigh; but without apparent advantage to either. But this young disputant had struck at the root of the matter.

However, Dr. Jourdan needed no help. Furthermore, it would have seemed a discourtesy to increase a pressure, where already the good clergyman was at so evident a pinch. Isabel, with quick observation, noted her father's uneasy desire, and she hastened to urge,

"Pray don't say anything, papa."

It was plain that Doctor McVeigh was getting a little out of temper, and the company waited with some uneasiness upon the next move in this interesting encounter. Certainly, a right understanding in this matter was of great concern to them. Meantime Mr. Harrington, yielding to his daughter's whispered injunction, compromised in a soliloquy to himself, "I am sure that a reminder of the true conditions of a practice, can only be 'offensive' when the practice itself is an offence."

Dr. Jourdan pleaded: "Intending all due respect to you, sir, I had not purposed a rejoinder that might be taken as rude. If you consider it so, pray excuse me in behalf *of the earnest interest* I take in this question.

I am anxious to discuss the matter with you, and to meet you candidly on every point."

In a measure mollified, the Doctor now suggested, no longer asserted, "Is it not better to make a mistake *occasionally*, rather, than by passive inaction, never to do any good?"

Isabel smiled. The question betrayed so much recession, that she could not but notice the discomfiture it confessed. It showed also a color of distrust in the tenability of his position as first stated: at least in his successful maintenance of it. Then, too, it hinted at a preparation to retire in as good order as possible.

But his exact opponent unmercifully compelled him to face back again with, "I don't object, Doctor, to your receding from your original proposition. Do you now disclaim it?"

"How's that?" rather uncertainly queried the minister.

"You proposed that it was better to make a mistake, not 'occasionally,' but 'nine' times, rather than fail to do good 'once'."

The Doctor was disconcerted. Here was an instance where he could have wished not to have been taken at his word. But he nerved up to respond,

"Well, have it so then."

"I desire to have it only as you yourself wish it stated." He pursued in conclusion, "I propose finally: Are you not wholly and startlingly wrong? And to recur; First: In direct answer to your last position, I would reply: It is *not* better to make a mistake nine times, nor even occasionally; because it is *not* necessary in this relation so to do, in order to *reach the point* of accomplishing some good. It is *not required to* give nine dollars to unworthy people, in

order to secure a one-dollar investment in behalf of the alleviation of worthy need. If the money was yours, pardon me for saying that, you have wasted it. If it was trusted to you by another to bestow, then have you not misapplied a trust fund?"

Doctor McVeigh winced. This was a stinging indictment. Young Jourdan still went on:

"Whether yours or another's, you have spent nine dollars to foster and encourage wrong doing; wrong doing which leads on to more pronounced phases of abrupt crime. You have, also, taken nine dollars of relief, intended for the remission of actual suffering, and applied them toward a swelling of the criminal calendar."

There was a pause, and a somewhat oppressive silence.

Such a bold plain analysis of the minister's charity code, though it may not have been a novel one, was perhaps under the circumstances, a daring one. Nevertheless, it appealed as truth and sound doctrine to almost every one present. The intelligent minds there listening, could not dissent from the logic, nor challenge the truth of the young Doctor's conclusions.

Isabel was not behind the others in recognizing the legitimacy of his deductions. It was fair to pronounce them self-evident. While she felt sympathy for the Reverend Doctor, in respect to the awkward corner in which he was placed, she could not but admire the courage of the layman, in putting forward an opposing faith so valiantly. Her nature glowed in response, and she was drawn toward this man.

From an interest in the subject, she had advanced to an interest *in the speaker.* Perhaps this was not surprising. *He carried them* all with him. His whole

bearing had been so earnest! His eyes, large with intelligent luminousness, had a wonderful influence in aiding home to conviction, the apt utterances of his tongue.

She noted also that, notwithstanding his advantage over his prelatical contestant, his high breeding suppressed any air of exultation. His demeanor throughout, though earnest, had been respectful. She thought to herself, "Is this young man indeed so deeply interested in the 'Problem of the Poor'!" A fascination crept over her. She caught herself longing to go and stand by him, and proclaim herself his disciple. Then she blushed and shrank within herself at the thought. She 'knew' this young advocate must be a brave man. She so affirmed to herself; but softly, as though it was her secret; conning it over in sweet reserve. In mid-ocean, and the steamer in a blaze, she would have turned confidently to this fearless nature. In such a strait she would have trusted herself with implicit reliance upon his ability mental and physical, to devise a rescue. His eyes, his mouth, his expression, his mien, his language; they all distinguished him as a superior man: sincere and confident in his opinions: brave and uncompromising in pronouncing and defending them.

Who shall question that the hidden sympathy she gave was an influence, reaching out to this young reformer; confirming and strengthening him? There are such currents. And indeed they are palpable in their impulsion.

After this flash of realities, this momentary revealing of actualities, (as often they are acknowledged, beneath a surface of counter acquiescence,) there was a movement through the rooms, as though the circle was tak-

ing a quick breath; so sudden had been this lifting into clearer, higher truth.

The Doctor, however, grandly waved the whole matter aside; and he sought to discourage the further advance of young Jourdan, by saying, "You seek to upset old and time-honored acceptances. I object; and I fear that I must withdraw from further discussion with you."

The reply came quickly, and not inaptly. It was, too, in the nature of an appeal: "My dear sir; anything like pernicious novelty, has been farthest of all from my intention. I have sought to discuss a grave question with you, as one earnestly seeking the truth. I beg you to meet me simply as a parishioner, in an effort to correct me. But if I am right, then are you not wrong? Pardon this way of putting it. And yet ought I to ask pardon for suggesting so evident a conclusion? If I am wrong, then your learning and acknowledged ability, backed by the right, ought certainly to be exerted in my behalf, to rescue from that error. And though you covered me with confusion in the delivery, should you not seek to enforce the admonition?"

Doctor McVeigh knew not how to answer. He was keen to perceive the shock his tenets had received. Even the authority and dignity of ancient usage failed to reinforce his position. But he was not equal to owning himself in the wrong. He affected, therefore, an affronted dignity, and "begged" again "to decline further discussion."

He walked away.

"Doctor Jourdan," laughingly challenged now a chatty young *society belle*, "I think sir, that you are *in disgrace.*"

Not so, however, thought Isabel. She had looked and listened, considering deeply in her mind; and with a desire to decide for the right. She had felt drawn, both by admiration and conviction, to declare to this man her assent. Yet any thought of so doing raised a fluttering reluctance.

No, he was not in disgrace with her! Yet she did not wish to speak with him—yet. Something within whispered that if she did so, she might—betray too much—sympathy.

Her father moved toward the young physician and she silently withdrew from his arm. Mr. Harrington cordially took Dr. Jourdan's hand and declared in his hearty way,

"Young man, you are on solid ground. I am with you." He looked for Isabel, that she might couple her acquiescence with his; but she had timorously anticipated and avoided this. Others joined in concurrence and the conversation became general upon ways and methods of dealing with pauperism. Just before the resumption of music, Dr. Jourdan, in conclusion, and in answer to a question of Mr. Credulo's, pronounced this startling arraignment:

"Every man has now the availabilities, thrown wide open to him, for determining whether he is helping or hindering in his bestowals. We have in this city, an organization for the guidance of those who desire information in their charity disbursements. It is ably equipped. It has, in addition to its other facilities, a record of all the fraudulent swindlers in Brooklyn. I cannot withdraw the affirmation that the men who, in disregard of these records, give money to professional frauds, are coadjutors in their iniquities: and, of course, co-responsible for worse criminal sequences. Any such

line of guidance as that just defined by our kind pastor, seems to me a mistaken one. If funds are put into his hands for vicarious beneficiary disbursement, then, looking squarely at it, his methods lead to waste: nay, they amount to a breach of trust. And viewing all resources as talents lent from God, then such economy of appliance assumes the startling character of a breach of God's trust."

* * * * * *

Before we close this chapter, let us ascertain, very briefly, what we may of the antecedent life, habits and relations, social and otherwise, of this physician on "The Hill."

He is now thirty-eight years of age; and unmarried. His practice is large and remunerative; his home, the triple embodiment of taste, elegance and comfort.

He enjoys the *post facto* benefit of a vigorous training under judicious and competent tutelage.

His father, an able physician before him, had made no attempt to bias his son's inclinations in the choice of a profession. He took care, however, to bestow scrupulous attention to the fundamental and rudimentary training of that son. It was then expected of the young man, he having attained the age of twenty-five, that he make for himself a deliberate choice of some life work; either commercial or professional.

The young student, after giving the matter careful thought, signified—"Medicine and Surgery."

Then had followed the usual course; supplemented after graduation by a two-years' practical experience in hospital at Berlin. Finally, at the age of thirty, Walter Jourdan, M. D., D. S., commenced the life work for which *he had faithfully* prepared.

In due time he became the professional partner of

his father. Gradually, and as increasing competency appeared to warrant and justify that responsibility, Dr. Jourdan Senior, transferred his own practice. And now, the father has wholly withdrawn from his active professional work, and the son has as wholly and as acceptably assumed it.

The home he occupies is his own. It is an inheritance from his grandfather Jourdan, who died nearly three years ago. The grandson has occupied it since then; and Mrs. Clarkson, an elderly lady of rotundity and beaming aspect, manages the dinners, the details and the servants.

She is a good housekeeper; but the Washington Avenue neighbors have passed along the word that "the time has come" when young Dr. Jourdan "should choose for himself a wife" to preside and lend grace of manner in that elegant home, and sit opposite her affectionate husband in that handsome dining-room.

Perhaps there are some, who, if duly solicited in the premises, might kindly interest themselves in aiding to the accomplishment of so desirable a relation. Cases *have* been known, where a neighborly interest to such an end was manifested, even without solicitation!

Dr. Jourdan, however, has given little or no consideration to the danger of his situation. So thoroughly, at present, is he enamored with his profession, that thought of mistress of gentler rule has not yet engaged him.

CHAPTER XI.

CRISSIE.

SUCCEEDING the night of the recital: a gentle morning in June. Such an one as encourages mothers to send out their babies, that they may breathe its fragrance.

Mrs. Clifford danced gaily about in the lower hall, frolicking, with baby Crissie in her arms. Letty was busy adjusting the belongings to the child's carriage.

"O you precious little rose!" laughed the mother to the babe with glowing address. She held the little one high in the air. She played with it, sang to it; romped with it, cooed to it; pressing the child's fragrant head again and again to her lips; to her bosom.

She possessed a grand contralto voice, and its rich volume filled the lower house. Crissie entered fully into the spirit of her regal mamma's frolic, and Letty stood admiringly and respectfully waiting.

"I don't——just want to let my darling go! Will she surely come back?" This, with a show of very earnest directness to the baby in an interval of the merry-making.

Beaming eyes and exulting arms! Thus the baby answered; and one might take it—"Yes;" and one might take it—"No."

"Letty, do be very careful. Don't leave her for 'one little minute'." Mrs. Clifford seemed to give the child *up reluctantly, still* lingering to look on while *Letty settled the tiny* mistress in her carriage.

"Where best I go, ma'am?"

"Turn down DeKalb Avenue, on the sunny side. Take her to the park. Don't remain away more than an hour."

The mother yet remained, musing and looking after; standing under the arch of the main entrance. The miniature vehicle, propelled briskly by the maid, was now passing down the wide front way. No railing separated from the sidewalk. Soon the little equipage passed beyond observation.

Now these directions agreed with Letty's inclinations. First: Because Washington Park was a pleasant place in which, not only to amuse baby, but to be, herself, entertained.

Secondly: Mr. Jip Foxhard, a very brisk and a very foxy young dealer in dilapidated hardware and discarded bottles, at a small shop on Myrtle Avenue hard by, was also accustomed to take a walk, an occasional "constitutional," in Washington Park.

There *had* been times when Mr. Jip Foxhard's admiring eyes followed Letty's trim figure. This occular regard had not gone unnoticed by the maid. It was succeeded by still further advances; until, at the present, a very confidential acquaintance had matured between them.

On this account Mr. Foxhard's walks have increased in frequency, until, at the present, they are liable somewhat to interfere with——the junk business. Notwithstanding, he does not curtail them, either as respects their number or their duration.

This open-air courting in the parks, being now by custom and concession openly carried on before all frequenters of such places, perhaps it is time that solicitous mammas open also their eyes to a realization of

the "openness" of the risks thereby involved to infant charges!

Letty had perambulated the gravelly ways, perhaps for fifteen minutes, and was in the near vicinity of the flag-staff, where she encountered her admirer. Such a meeting, so very common of observation and so familiar in incident to all who have strolled through a public park on a sunny day, needs not to be described here.

Jip had reached the interesting point and he was decidedly in earnest. His junk affairs had prospered. He was a good principled young fellow as the world averages along his plane, and with a heart in the right place. He urged his suit, and Letty was not positively averse. Matters were approaching a grave crisis, and—baby had fallen fast asleep!

They paused at a secluded spot where the carriage fell under the shade of a low evergreen. Letty looked lovingly at her charge and asked in a whisper, "Would ee 'ittle darling like a quiet nap?"

Acting upon the proverb that silence gives an affirmative, for the baby certainly gave answer of no other kind, she threw a wide veil across the carriage top, and rested from her walk.

Jip was very sanguine. He had—"great business anticipations." He expatiated largely thereon and Letty was certainly becoming interested. Absorbed thus in each other, and in the discussion of future plans; taking a step here, plucking a dandelion there; they strolled a number of paces from the sleeping infant, until intervening shrubs hid the carriage from their view.

But *it was only a few steps!!*

One and another passer-by, sauntered along carelessly.

Jip became emboldened. Screened under the shadow of an evergreen, he meditated a kiss. "Kin I?" he urged eagerly.

Letty was not a maiden easily won, and she replied with a color of tantalizing derision in her answer, and as ironically pointing the irregularity of Jip's syntactical constructions,

"No: you 'kin't'."

"Jis 'twon:" Jip wheedlingly:

"'Jist' none."

But she relented—as most women do—and when the opportune moment arrived, just at the last, Jip was permitted duly to record his "*au revoir*" on her lips. This accomplished, he reluctantly moved away, and Letty returned to her charge.

Every thing about the carriage appeared just as she had left it. "Baby must still be asleep;" so she thought. "I'll take one peep and then wheel her home."

She drew aside the corner of the veil. She looked with gentle caution through the opening. And now her heart stands still with a dreadful foreboding. Tumbled and disordered wraps—only!

She quickly tore away the screen and thrust her trembling hands down among the coverings. But no baby Crissie was there; and with a scream of terror she sank to her knees on the green sward.

Jip was not far away. Hearing the alarm, he came bounding back.

The girl sat crouched down with her face hidden in her hands; bowed and quaking with fright. Curious sympathizers began to collect in a little knot. Jip,

quickly possessed of the cause of Letty's scream, gesticulated violently, and in as violent language called on those who had gathered about, to help him search for the child.

A few moved about with halting air, peering here and there, as though expecting to uncover the abductor close upon the spot: transiently hiding, perhaps, in some bush, with the child conveniently tucked under his arm, and patiently waiting to be arrested! They were, for the most part, women and children; and they poked about gingerly: indeed fearing to find what they sought.

Letty, recovered from the first crushing weight of her fright, was sobbing distractedly. Jip, having returned unsuccessful after his search, was urging her to hurry home and inform. She was too distraught to give him much heed.

Taking the disposition finally into his own hands, he suddenly left her and dashed off to the Police Precinct Station on Myrtle Avenue.

"Well, young miss; you'd better—"

Letty now looked up with agony in her face. An elderly woman had been talking severely to her. At her bowed figure, we had more correctly said.

"My God, how dare I go home!" she faltered.

"You're in for it;" commented, in reply, the severe person; "and the quicker you report, the better."

Then the girl sprang at the carriage. Grasping the propelling handles she whirled the empty vehicle before her. Out at the gate; up DeKalb; past Clermont; past Vanderbilt and then finally into Clinton Avenue. Not an instant did she pause, nor one jot slacken her *headlong pace.*

Just as she swung, in wild precipitancy, onto the

GRASPING THE PROPELLING HANDLES, SHE WHIRLED THE EMPTY VEHICLE BEFORE HER. (Page 154.)

wide stone flagging leading up to Mr. Harrington's front entrance, his daughter Isabel stepped from the hall to the piazza in walking dress. Her startled eyes instantly fell on the flying Letty, the tumbled disordered baby equipage; and an awful dismay entered her heart.

She sprang down the steps and met the little carriage, her frightened eyes fixed only on the disarranged baby wraps. Her hands, too, now threw them wildly back: one, another; and with a throb which set every nerve quivering she turned a white face of agonized inquiry to Letty.

The girl was already staggering from excitement, fright, and her breathless flight hither from the park. She could only gasp—"Crissie—stolen:" and then she sank fainting by the side of the vacant carriage.

It was a cruel blow. At first it deadened where it struck. Not to insensibility, but to curdling, faint-sickening terror. In a moment more it will paralyze every faculty, as a whirlwind sweeping the wild waste of plain. There hangs now the dreadful darkening premonitory calm.

She drew her breath in gasps, and expired it with quivering tremors.

A mountain-ash grew near the walk. With one hand she grasped the lower branch for support. The other tugged and clutched into the covering upon her breast. Her widely opened eyes were wild, without direction. Her teeth sank cruelly into her lower lip. She staggered and swung upon the branch, the heart-rending picture of a gathering realization of awful agony.

The moments are not many which measure the *sustained tension* of such cumulating consternation.

In another wavering swerve, losing her hold upon the branch, and with a shriek that reached and rang far through the avenue, she sank insensible upon her face.

The house was alarmed: the neighborhood aroused.

Very soon discovered, she was tenderly raised and borne into the wide hall. Willing arms were about her; trembling sympathetic hands loosed her outer habit; and then she was carried slowly up the stairs, and laid as one dead upon the bed in her own room.

The great waves rolled over her. Death and nature joined in conflict: death grimly determining to have her: nature heroically battling to save her.

* * * * * *

Jip dashed into the Police Precinct Station at the corner of Myrtle and Vanderbilt Avenues. He quickly informed of what had taken place. Mr. Harrington was a resident well known and esteemed in the locality, and the sergeant in charge did all that he then could in such an extremity.

Word at once was sent over the wires: the patrolmen throughout the city informed, and special detectives immediately sent out.

But no one knew the character or sex of the abducting party. Was it a man; a woman; men or women?

Jip could not tell.

Letty could not tell.

The child had vanished like the feathery fluff of a thistle seed upon a whiff of air.

And it was very simply done.

The success of some of the most difficult undertakings in crime and crusade, often lies in the simplicity rather than in the complexity of the manœuvres.

Burle *had long had in* view, the accession of an *infant appendage to his* schemes. Loitering along that

morning in Washington Park with Jane, his companion, his quick eye had caught sight of the isolated carriage. Immediately he comprehended the situation.

Here was an opportunity!

"Whose child is it?" That matters not to him.

He scans the situation. The lovers are near; but a turn in the shrub-bordered path hides them. At this moment no one else is in sight: neither are there sounds of any approaching footsteps.

He lifts a corner of the screen.

The child is sleeping! Could fortune more have favored him!

Awake, and the risk would have been too great: indeed not to be thought of. Such an all-favoring chance as this may never tender again! Fifteen seconds; yes, half that time will suffice to accomplish his purpose.

He hastily instructed Jane. Then, while *he* kept watch, *she* quietly lifted the sleeping Crissie from the carriage, as quickly extended and covered the child's form with the shawl already about her own person, then hurried away with the baby against her breast. Burle readjusted the screen, took a sharp reconnoitre and hastened after his departing accomplice.

Overtaking her, the two, in apparent easy unconcern, passed out at the southwest exit. Turning, after a few steps down Clermont Avenue, to the right around the corner at Raymond street, they continued in that direction until they reached Willoughby, where they entered a cross-town car going north.

These conveyances have no conductors; and the fare, once dropped into the box, the driver's attention, *confined mainly* to his horse, is not thereafter of special

avail, either as a help or hindrance to any one inside the car.

They alighted after reaching City Park; walked west one block to Navy street, where another car of the same description overtook them on its way to South Brooklyn. This they entered; rode in, unnoticed and unmolested, until they reached a point on Atlantic Avenue but a few steps from Island Number Ten. Then leaving it, in a few moments more they were in their own rooms and beyond likelihood of pursuit.

There was no suspicious haste of movement. They walked rapidly but quietly; and no one, meeting them had cause to suspect a crime.

A mother, accompanied apparently by her husband, her sleeping baby in her arms, passed along the streets.

There was not, in this, any noticeable singularity of incident. It caused not even a passing observation, Certainly no one afterwards could be found who connected so simple an occurrence with the abduction of the little granddaughter of the wealthy Crandall Harrington.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STRUGGLE: A CRISIS.

No time was lost. Messengers with urgent summons were at once dispatched. One was sent to Dr. Jourdan; another went for Mr. Harrington.

The two men met in the hall half an hour afterwards: both hastened up the stairs to the bedside of Mrs. Clifford: neither spoke as they ascended, and in a few moments more they stood together beside the sufferer.

The father regarded his beloved daughter with a sorrow-stricken countenance; the physician scanned the face of his patient with the keen absorbed scrutiny of professional interest.

In a moment more the doctor involuntarily started. He had recognized the face that with so tremulous an asking, besought him the evening before. A new and different anxiety now transciently showed upon his countenance; but he quickly controlled it. He only addressed with even greater concentration of professional endeavor.

He had been brought to the house by an anxious neighbor, who, upon the way, gave a partial account of the catastrophy.

Turning abruptly now to Mr. Harrington, who seemed crushed by the calamity, he said in quick words but in a gentle undertone, "You can do nothing now to help her. I should prefer, for the present, that you remain away. You can understand what she would urge to have done—at once."

Mr. Harrington struggled with himself, and after a moment, replied, "Yes, I know—her child—I am going. But, Doctor——"

He could not articulate any coherent conclusion to his broken sentences. It was not necessary. His look of appeal, as it shudderingly lifted from regard of his stricken daughter, seeking the physician's face; this fully interpreted for him.

"Do not fear that she will die; I will do all in my power;" encouraged Dr. Jourdan reassuringly. "Go you and perform also. You cannot set measures afoot too *quickly*. An hour now may effect more than a month *hereafter*. You know too, that the child restored, *will act as* the best of all medicine for the mother."

Mr. Harrington, thus encouraged, and spurred now by an impulse at first temporarily crowded from his mind by the greater anxiety for his daughter, hurried away to devise and pursue in the quest for little Crissie.

Seeking first for Letty, and ascertaining that the girl was in a measure recovered, he bade her quickly get ready. She did so, following him as he made his way hurriedly to the stable.

Mr. Harrington had a very fast "Godolphin" Arabian. Isabel had named him "Fury." He was large, powerful, deep chested, having also great endurance. He had been a phenomenon of trotting speed in professional hands.

Dennis, in anticipation of the requisition which he knew would soon come, had harnessed him to a gentleman's two-wheeled road cart, and he was now discovered doing his best to restrain the animal.

Everything was ready; the way was open. Mr. Harrington made but brief pause. He first lifted Letty in; sprung then himself to the seat beside her, grasped the reins, set his hat firmly and said simply, "Let him go."

There was a rush; a whirling rattle. The cart bounded after the speeding animal and was quickly out of sight. Then all was still again.

Dr. Jourdan took a chair, drew it close to the couch and renewed his anxious regard of the insensible patient. This careful study appeared to give him unusual disquiet. He rose hastily and motioned to Mrs. Credulo. This lady, with two others of the more intimately *acquainted neighbors*, was in anxious attendance upon *the afflicted household*.

"Send for my father;" he quietly requested.

Just as she was leaving the room to dispatch this word he added, "Ask him to hasten." Then he resumed his watch at the bedside.

Though the patient was wholly unconscious, the eyes were wide open and staring. Blood came from her mouth. Dr. Jourdan manifested especial uneasiness about this. But he was relieved, when, after careful examination, he ascertained that it came from the tongue, which in her spasm she had bitten. He set about in active measures for her relief, giving rapid directions, and assisted by the others.

Her head was drawn rigidly to one side; her arms and body were stiff; the respiration, accelerated, short and irregular. Suddenly she exhibited the most painful symptoms, as if suffocating. Finally this paroxysm terminated with a shivering scream which cut the nerves and set every sensibility trembling. Then with a sobbing groan her muscles relaxed and she threw her head sideways; forwards; backwards. The eyes gave over the awful death-like stare and half closed; the teeth chattered and she moved her feet uneasily.

Mrs. Credulo soon returned with the elder Jourdan.

As the father entered his son looked quickly up. His face, for the instant, had a look of desperate appeal.

"Quite unusual for Walter;" his father inwardly commented at the moment; but his attention quickly passed on to the patient.

He then bent over her, at the same time placing his *finger* upon the pulse.

"*Rapid*—irregular;" he remarked. The son recapitulated the symptoms already noted by him and con-

cluded, "I thought that Mr. Harrington would feel more satisfied if we both watched the case." He said nothing about his own great anxiety.

"What is your diagnosis?" asked the father.

The younger physician glanced uneasily at the anxious women present, then replied in an undertone intended only for his father. The last words were caught by Mrs. Credulo, "—brought on by the mental shock."

The elder nodded his head in concurrence. A few more words in consultation, and then they continued together with alert industry in such expedients as professional skill suggested for the relief of poor Isabel.

Not more than half an hour had elapsed since the younger of the two physicians had entered; but already a pulse of hope seemed to beat in the house, where before existed nothing but an awful uncertainty: the women standing by and witnessing, with helpless horror, the painful spasms that wrenched and tortured the suffering woman: utterly without a knowledge of what or how to do for her.

* * * * * *

Meantime Fury, reined from Clinton into DeKalb Avenue, went flying down toward the Park. Mr. Harrington was reflecting, "It can be of no use to go *there* now;" and his mind continued anxiously at work, in an effort to decide upon some more definite and promising direction of action.

"Who was with you?" he asked on a venture of Letty, as well as he could manage to do so above the clamor and rattle; watching ahead and holding all the while *heavily on the horse's* mouth.

"*It was Jip Foxhard.*"

Jip Foxhard not being included in the circle of Mr. Harrington's acquaintances, he sought further enlightenment. "Where does he live?"

"You must turn down Cumberland;" at once shouted Letty excitedly in return, and indicating to the right with her hand. Just at the moment they were approaching that street.

"What for?" in like manner shouted back Mr. Harrington; his mind rather diverted on account of the headlong pace of Fury, but nevertheless turning the fiery animal as suggested: for he must do as the girl directs on the instant if he does so at all, else, in two more seconds they will be flying down DeKalb Avenue, far beyond possibility of this divergence.

"To go to Jip's;" almost screamed Letty in terrified answer; for just then, in compliance with the girl's suggestion, the cart was describing a hazardous turn to the right, and wraps and hat, resisting this sudden change of direction, manifested a disposition to sail off down DeKalb Avenue.

Letty clutched her clothing with one hand, half turned and with the other grasped the metal guard at the back of the seat. The inner wheel under Mr. Harrington, was spinning in this hazardous detour more than a foot from the ground. He braced his feet, leaned his body far out over his side to recover the equilibrium, and at the same time increased his weight on the lines. After this frightful turn, the horse, evidently newly inspired by the change from rough cobble stones to the smoother concrete surface which covers Cumberland street, sprang away again in the new direction like an exhilarated whirlwind.

But Fury did not break his stride. He kept his

feet, though the pace was ever becoming a more fearful one.

They approached the crossing at Myrtle Avenue, and Letty, still holding on with all her might, bent forward and looked up into Mr. Harrington's face. Her countenance wore a look of desperate courage, as though she had determined to do her duty, though she were flung into the street.

"What is it?" called out Mr. Harrington, noticing her effort to speak, but not daring to take his eyes from the rushing beast.

"We must turn down Myrtle;" again shouted Letty, her heart in her mouth as she remembered the peril of their last divergence.

Fury's pace at this moment was truly a terrific one. A straight line would have touched his every part along the line of his back, from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail. He was flying; and his hoofs seemed hung in indistinguishable maze in the air under him.

Mr. Harrington could only shake his head. "I shall not dare attempt it;" he thought to himself. "I only hope," he continued in reflection, that we get safely *across*."

And so he kept Fury's head straight on: and in a second more, like a flash, and with a clanging report, they spun across the car tracks at Myrtle Avenue; fortunately without running anybody or anything down; and again the horse thundered away toward the Navy Yard.

But now Mr. Harrington began to get Fury under control, and by the time they had reached Park Avenue he could safely effect a turn, which he did. Continuing *to follow the square* around to the left, they reached *Myrtle Avenue again*, one block below Cumberland.

"We are close to the place now;" informed Letty, breathing once more. "Jip's is only a step from this corner."

"You jump out then, child, and run and get him;" and Mr. Harrington brought the horse to a stand, just where North Oxford comes into Myrtle.

He drew a long breath of relief and rested his arms. Letty climbed out: she disappeared down Myrtle Avenue. Mr. Harrington had thus an undiverted interval in which to plan the next move. When the girl reappeared with Jip, he had determined to drive to the nearest Police Precinct.

Jip came up with Letty. "You were with her when this happened?" asked Mr. Harrington without any preface.

"Yes sir:" replied Jip simply: with much anxiety however, respecting the purpose of the question and the extent of his own accountability.

"Help her in;" directed Mr. Harrington, nodding toward the girl. Jip complied, giving his hand while Letty climbed back to her seat.

"*Don't go near his head:*" This also to Jip who next made a motion toward holding Fury's bridle. "I want you to go with us; you can perhaps be of assistance. There is a seat behind."

Jip had clambered into it almost before the request had been concluded. The lad was wonderfully alert, and could take in a situation almost without a word of explanation.

The horse was turned now to the left and immediately started briskly up Myrtle Avenue. When Vanderbilt was reached Mr. Harrington drew up at the Police Station upon the southeast corner As he did so he turned questioningly toward Jip.

"Did you ever hold a horse?"

"No! no!" he hastily exclaimed; again recalling Jip, who was springing out to take the animal by the bit. "Ten men couldn't control him that way."

Jip got back again.

"I simply want you to hold the reins lightly. Don't pull up on his mouth, for then he will think you wish him to start. Be gentle, keep his head pointed at the hitching-post, and talk to him quietly."

Jip's seat faced toward the back. He straightened up now on his knees, turned toward the front, and Mr. Harrington cautiously transferred the reins. Then he got out. He went to Fury's head and patted him a moment as though to say, "Now you see, I am out; am going into this door close by, and you must wait quietly until my return."

Fury understood it perfectly; settled himself obediently, stretching his nose to relieve the pressure of the bit, and looked intelligently after his master.

"It's an awful go, wasn't it?" whispered Jip to Letty.

The tears instantly started anew to her eyes. The poor girl was a fit subject herself, at that moment, for a prescription and a bed; but she made no complaint.

"Yes;" she sobbed in a smothered way, lest Fury take alarm, and with her apron to her face; "and we are to blame for it all."

Jip meditated uneasily. "They won't do nothing to us?" he inquired next, in the same whispered way.

Letty looked uncertainly at him. She had not thought about this. But in a moment she concluded in her mind against *any* probability of a punitive accounting.

"*Oh no!*" she returned with assurance: "Mrs. Clif-

ford is too dear a good lady. "She'd know I'd a' cut my hand off before I'd let this to be done, if I'd a' known. She——"

Here Letty covered her eyes again; and Jip, still on his knees upon the seat behind carefully holding the reins, felt awkward and anxious. After a few moments, again:

"Why mightn't we help; or do sumph'n? I wonder what he wants uv us now, along with him?"

Jip spoke in a soliloquizing way, half to himself and half to Letty; halting between the words as though his mind was yet in somewhat of a daze, but nevertheless struggling hard to—"figure this thing out." He continued,

"I think I could—I think I oughter get on track uv something; spot somebody."

Letty's apron came away from her eyes; "Could you?" she asked hopefully.

"You lem me alone fer it;" he now assured encouragingly. "I know this old town better'n he does;" looking, as he made this declaration, toward the station door within which Mr. Harrington had disappeared.

Jip was quite a young man: Mr. Harrington had lived all his life in Brooklyn, and was past fifty. Letty's hesitating face showed that she put rather a wavering faith in this topographic assumption.

"I mean the part uv it the baby's likely to be in;" he explained, answering the incredulous look. "You lem me alone fer smellin' out a clue."

"I will; I shall never want you to come near me again if you don't;" now declared Letty. "You can *'lem me alone'* 'till you find out something. My heart *would smother* me if I married you, and my darling *baby not found.*"

This was an application of the "lem me alone" idea, wholly disavowed as any part of his meaning by the protesting Jip. But Letty reiterated and insisted upon it.

Mr. Harrington hastily approached the sergeant's desk. He had no need to introduce himself, or, for that matter, to make known his errand. But the inspector of the district was present. That officer came forward immediately, saying,

"We went up to see you, but you had not returned. Then the house was in such a hub-bub of excitement that we couldn't get much out of the people. But now —by the way, is that the nurse girl out there?" He interrupted himself to ask this, at the same time looking through the window.

"Yes, she had the child in the Park when the misfortune occurred."

"I want," spoke the inspector, "a very careful description of the child; also what she had on: her age; color of hair, and had she much or little, and was it curly or straight: complexion; figure, chubby or slight; and also as to her clothing; what it consisted of; and were there any marks upon it?"

The word "marks" appeared to summon a more hopeful look than Mr. Harrington's face had hitherto borne; and as the officer paused at this point he had opportunity to say,

"As to marks of identification, the child has two little India-ink stars pricked upon her."

"Well!" now spoke up the inspector heartily, "that's good news. Whereabouts are they?"

"One on the lobe of each ear, on the inner side. It was *her mother's idea*, when the baby was only four *months old.*

MR. HARRINGTON HASTILY APPROACHED THE SERGEANT'S DESK.
(Page 168.)

"I think," ventured now the officer animatedly, "that such a mother must have a splendid head on her. I shouldn't wonder if she could help us in this affair."

"God help *her!*" almost sobbed the father, suddenly overcome. "She lies at death's door this moment."

There was a pause of silent sympathy, and in the interval a detective in citizen's attire, who had carefully listened but thus far said nothing, suggested, aside to his superior, "Better have the nurse girl in here, and telegraph out the description, as near as you can get it, without further delay." This was at once acquiesced in.

Letty was well qualified to give the information desired. She knew about every article that Crissie had on, even to her dainty little chemise. She was quick and intelligent in her replies, and it was but a short time before every station in the two great cities of New York and Brooklyn had the details of a full description.

After this, Fury was led into a stable near by, and Jip was also called in and examined. But he could add nothing.

These preliminaries concluded, a sickening sense of suspense, unsettled waiting, came over Mr. Harrington, and he was uneasy to be moving again. This was the first hint of that dragging uncertainty which pressed so dreadfully from that time forward. He often afterwards said, in referring to its influence upon them all, "It is worse than death."

Inspector Allen, understanding his distressful halt, approached him with a suggestive inquiry: "Do you want this thing in all the evening papers?"

"Will it help us?" eagerly asked Mr. Harrington in return.

Inspector Allen, very decidedly: "I think not; at

all events, not yet. A publication of the circumstance won't convey any new intelligence to us, and it might be of service to the abductor. He might get a point from it."

"You say 'he';" returned Mr. Harrington with anxious inquiry.

Inspector Allen, in reply: "Oh well! I don't know that it *is* a 'he'; but you may calculate sir, upon its being so. Women don't have the stomachs to do such a job, unless put up to it by a man."

"About the newspapers;" now recalled Mr. Harrington: "I will act upon your suggestion. Your experience is no doubt a much better guide than any notions of mine. I'll see to it at once;" and he started up energetically.

"Letty, you may go home."

"What is your name, my lad?" turning next to Jip.

Mr. Foxhard, in default of a card, deferentially communicated, *per ore*, his name and address: "Jipworth Foxhard, if you please sir. I keep a junk shop at blank hundred and blank Myrtle Avenue. But most uv 'em knows me best as 'Jip'."

"I should like to have you go with me then, Jip;" now requested Mr. Harrington. "I shall have hard riding and perhaps some telegraphing to do. You can serve me looking after the horse when I want to run in anywhere."

Jip was only too glad to comply. The cart was soon at the door; Mr. Harrington got on in front; Jip sprang up behind, and Fury dashed off again.

As regards the inspector's "suppression" theory; it may or it may not have been for the best. Had Burke, *through the evening papers*, learned the name of the *child's guardian, he would* have decided at once that

money to a large amount would be offered and used in a leverage to unearth him. Probably upon this he would have been frightened into flight; and perhaps to some distant point. Then, *per contra*, the occupants of Island Number Ten, seeing such an account and learning of the presence of a strange child in the Stanhope room, might, with the purpose of obtaining a reward, have given intelligence which would have led to recovery before Burle could have gotten safely off.

But again on the other hand, newspapers were rarely seen at Island Number Ten; and furthermore, not one in ten of the occupants could read them. Burle *could* read; and the Inspector's may therefore have been the wiser plan. We cannot tell. There were "pros," and there were "contras" as well. At all events Mr. Harrington, following the suggestions of Inspector Allen, succeeded in forestalling any published account of the abduction.

We return now to the darkened room where, after having administered their professional offices, sat Dr. Jourdan the senior and his son Walter, both anxiously watching upon the result of their efforts.

A change had supervened. The muscles had relaxed, but insensibility continued, and the patient had passed into profound stertorious sleep. The breathing was labored; the surface moist with perspiration.

The elder Jourdan decided now to leave the case with his son. After exchanging a few words with the young doctor he retired, and the latter resumed his seat at the bedside, closely attentive to the symptoms of the sufferer.

"*I am waiting with some anxiety upon the determination of this coma:*" thus he spoke in answer to an *inquiry from* Mrs. Credulo. "I would like to have

Mr. Harrington here when she comes out of it. Her first perception after returned consciousness, will relate to the moment after receiving the sudden intelligence of her loss. If a second shock does not supervene, her father then can do more to sustain her than any one else."

"Is there danger of such a relapse?" further questioned the lady, with excited trepidation.

The doctor did not at once answer. He resumed his intent regard of the unconscious woman. At last he replied slowly, half meditatively, "If I do not mistake, judging from what I can read from her face and head, ——" He made another pause, and finally concluded his sentence with an inspiration of satisfied hopefulness, "she will not have another attack."

Mrs. Credulo was anxiously curious. She drew a chair close to the young physician, sat down and joined him in his watch. After a few minutes she asked, "What has her head and face to do with it?"

"Nothing;" replied the doctor enigmatically. Then he added apologetically, as if in answer to the puzzled look of dissatisfaction which this very brief reply brought to the good lady's face, "Except as they indicate her general character."

Still Mrs. Credulo was not intelligently informed. She did not wish though to press too far. The time and place was not appropriate for curious insistence. He satisfied her, however, without the further asking.

"Much, almost everything I may say, depends on her nerve, her general control over herself, when she first emerges into consciousness. She will then again come suddenly into the knowledge of her calamity. So far, it *has been consciously* upon her, probably less than a *quarter of a minute*. Before those few seconds had

been told, that knowledge was suspended and she was plunged into a dark tunnel of utter oblivion. She is in the deep underground of that tunnel now; but I hope, nearing the light again. When that light is reached, and she once more realizes her loss, she will be living, as it were, the revived continuation of the shock of agony which overwhelmed her when the stroke first fell. If she is not a woman of extraordinary nerve, she is likely to go under a second time. Are you well acquainted with her?" he asked with abrupt directness, in conclusion.

"She is a magnificent creature;" replied Mrs. Credulo in a low voice, but with enthusiasm. "You speak about strength of nerve: I have seen her drive Fury, when to watch them, one might imagine a tempest flying by. Her father though, never seems to be alarmed. He laughs and says, 'Oh, don't you fear for Isabel! She could manage a tandem team of Furies.'"

The doctor listened eagerly. "Her father thinks a great deal of her?" The construction would make it an assertion: the inflection made it a question.

"Yes;" answered Mrs. Credulo; "they are devoted to each other."

After another interval of silent watching, the doctor in a low-whispered voice to his companion, continued uneasily; "The first stroke was very sudden. She had no warning: no time to brace against it. It took her so wholly unawares that she was carried off her feet. I hope she will behave stoutly when the second comes; but," looking anxiously at the white silent face, "I very much want her father with her then." Whereupon Mrs. Credulo got up and went to inquire if he had returned.

This conversation was not in the nature of gossip.

The interest manifested and the questions and opinions exchanged were natural and unobjectionable. Mrs. Credulo had known the physician from his babyhood, and the three families were all near neighbors. She now came back saying, "Letty is here, but she reports that Mr. Harrington may not return for more than an hour. They have no clue yet to the child."

Dr. Jourdan looked more troubled than before.

"So much depends," he sought to explain, "that I wish to have him with her when she wakes. But," he added reflectively, "she *may* continue a long time in this state."

"Have you other engagements waiting?" asked Mrs. Credulo.

"None very pressing;" he answered. "If I had, my father would attend to them for me. It is important that I be within call when consciousness returns. Ten minutes then will decide all."

While thus conversing he had been pacing softly back and forth. Now he resumed his place at the bedside. He fixed his eyes upon the patient. Mrs. Credulo again passed out of the room on some errand, and he was left alone with Isabel.

Her breast heaved and a deep drawn sigh came from her lips: then she was quiet again. Great billows of glossy shining hair, of the hue of unburnished gold, went rambling in lovely disorder upon the pillows above her head. The rigidity of hand and limb had gone. One white arm was curved with grace enchanting, though in sorrowful unconsciousness, and rested above her head. The doctor's eyes fell upon it, and he studied its matchless outline as might an artist, rapt in admiration of a perfect member in sculpture.

If one can understand how exquisite shapeliness may

harmoniously merge its lines with those of unusual strength: that was the impression made upon the physician.

Her face was partially turned from him. It presented a profile of extraordinary beauty, in which was meltingly blended, capability with loving gentleness. It indicated a nature self-reliant, but winsome withal, and affectionate. Happy perhaps when exciting pastime brought gleaming brilliancy to the eye and caused the breast to swell: but, the daring recreation over, happier still in leaning upon, confiding in and pressing close to some dear one whom she loved, trusted, relied upon.

The doctor's meditations were taking an unprofessional turn, and he caught himself in the reflection, "Her love would be the grandest crown of man's life!" Then he instantly chided himself for so indulging, admonishing severely, "I am the physician here." Nevertheless he could not smother the influence which tugged persistently for leave of expression. He realized that his was not, at present, the cold self-contained bearing of single scientific regard.

But at this moment the attitude of her extremity, her face, her deep heavy eyelashes falling down over closed eyes; all these appealed solemnly to him: and in response he conscientiously, nay, reverently even, in the presence of her great peril, remonstrated within himself, "No: only the physician now! Let me conjure every professional faculty in her behalf and forget all things else—now. It is a trust betrayed to jeopardize the lightest thread of that dear head, by straying, for one instant, into ideality."

His professional instincts were rallied none too soon; *for once more, with the* suddenness of an electric

shock, a scream, like the horrific cry of one sinking into a frightful abyss, broke from her lips and startled and rang through every crevice of the frightened house.

He sprang up: in a moment he was bending over her. She was not yet wholly conscious, but her eyes were unclosing slowly. Drops of perspiration gathered upon her forehead. She made an effort to sit up, and he put his hand behind her head, then down under her shoulders, aiding the impulse.

She was fairly upright before her eyes fully opened. At first she queried at him, dazed and bewildered. Gradually a look of rational intelligence established; and then—ah then, a sobbing moan, full of the keenest anguish, came forth; and lifting her face upward, she pressed her palms to her eyes, crying out, "My God! My Crissie!"

Her breast heaved and quivered, and anguishing tremors shook, and distressful throbs convulsed in every part.

The doctor watched her with an intense concern; and when, after a short interval, with unresisted sobs great tears forced their way through her fingers, then it was that a sympathizing spasm escaped, in spite of him, from his own breast. But it was one of glad relief; and he breathed again, thankfully whispering, "She is safe."

Yes: those tears were the glad signs to him of her deliverance. Had another mental shock followed, her second return would have closely skirted the terrible possibility of insanity.

"My God! My Crissie!" These are the only words she has *uttered. She is* wrestling now without another *cry; but, thank God,* with her senses all her own.

And though the agony is heartrending, the contest a desperate one, yet Dr. Jourdan feels confidence. He is sure that, ultimately, she will master herself.

His own eyes are blurred. He says hurriedly to Mrs. Credulo, who, hearing that shivering scream, has hurried back to the room, "Go and comfort the poor child if you can; I must find her father."

The "suppression" business successfully concluded, Mr. Harrington hurried back toward "The Hill." The more he considered the policy of keeping all knowledge of the abduction from the general public, the more he thought that he saw good reason for doubting the wisdom of such a policy. But he came to no conclusions. He determined to give the matter future careful consideration.

Fury's pace has abated from its impetuous first rush: nevertheless, very rapid work has been done. Not more than an hour and a half has elapsed since his first flight, and now he is rapidly trotting up DeKalb Avenue, approaching home.

Jip has ventured to proffer his own peculiar plan of detective investigation to Mr. Harrington, who in response encouraged the lad. "Who knows;" thought this gentleman; "Jip may stumble upon a clue that a professional would miss." The young junk dealer still sat on the back seat; but as they passed Cumberland street, Mr. Harrington held up for a moment and the lad sprang down and away.

Reaching home the father hurried to his daughter's room. She was sitting up in the bed. One hand covered her eyes: the other she stretched out to him, *appealing silently.*

It was a sustaining consolation for her to lay that

throbbing head and press that quivering face against her father's breast. His arms were around her; and holding her close to him, he essayed to talk with a steady voice.

He related, dwelling upon particulars, the incidents of his hour-and-a-half ride. He told her of the places visited, and of his plans thus far formed for recovering the lost Crissie. He succeeded in diverting her mind, and very soon her sobs quieted, and for the first time she raised her face to his.

They were alone. His heart ached as he looked into her eyes. They were blurred; swollen; and her great sorrow had bruised and marred her handsome face.

She asked for Dr. Jourdan. "He has been very attentive, papa, and he went away to look for you; to bring you. I am sure—can he not aid us in finding—" But it was hard to control the throes of sorrow, and again she hid her face on her father's breast.

Not long in recovering however, she was then eager to debate plans for the repossession of her darling: her "precious baby"! She would not lose "one little minute." She dwelt so continuously and earnestly upon her faith in Dr. Jourdan's counsel, insisting so confidently that it would be of advantage to them, that her father, learning of the physician's return, asked that he join them.

(Indeed Isabel had not forgotten her impression of this man, as formed on the evening previous, at the musicale.)

In response, the doctor tendered any aid possible for him to give, and together they concerted methods of inquiry and plans of pursuit. One of his suggestions Mr. Harrington adopted. Not only so, he at once acted upon it. He called a telegraph messenger, wrote out a

few lines, and within half an hour an additional incentive to effort had been posted in every Police Precinct. This was an offer of one thousand dollars to any one giving important information: the sum to be doubled if such information led to a recovery of the child.

The diversion from a brooding passive contemplation of her affliction, thus effected by an active participation in counsels, served an excellent purpose in behalf of Isabel.

And thus the three were called in a triple conclave of rescue; nor was Dr. Jourdan backward in declaring to this alliance. The hearty will manifested by him seemed a sustaining comfort to the bereaved mother. That night, when, finally yielding to her father in his anxious request, she laid her head upon her pillow, it was with a feeling of very helpful reliance upon this now better-known neighbor. His keen ready mind had indeed impressed her.

"How much he can, how much he *will* aid us! With *his* interest enlisted, how much more may we count upon success in our efforts to recover darling lost Crissie!" These were the last thoughts that engaged her before losing herself at last wearily in sleep.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GARRET RETREAT.

Two months subsequent to the events narrated in the last chapter.

We turn back to Island Number Ten, *taking up there the thread of* suspended narrative at the point

of Burle's cruel assault upon Jane Stanhope. Let us inquire first after Connie.

In a few words, we sketch the situation:—A long gloomy attic, half filled with cast-aside rubbish. This loft running the whole length of "The Island." A dust-dimmed window at either end, and a crack here and there in the roof, barely supplying light enough to guide one in groping about.

A narrow scuttle-hole over the top of the pit-hole staircase was the only entrance. A seven-foot ladder, light in construction, was customarily used as a means of reaching this passage. This ladder could easily be drawn up after him, by any person upon entering: and here was Connie's hiding asylum with baby Crissie.

The place was close, almost stifling; the roof low. Connie, by taking position in the centre and under the ridge pole, could barely stand upright. There was no flooring; only here and there a board. These had been scattered about loose, and the boy, after gathering had laid them together in the centre of the long garret.

This little platform-spot which he thus arranged for himself and Crissie, was like a small island. Riffles of plaster surrounded it, but no refreshing coolness came from them. They had hardened into hot aridity years upon years ago. Dusty delusions they now were, both to sight and sense. Very often, discordant sounds, as of quarrelings mingled with wrangling oaths and vile epithets, came from the under-depths that these petrified little wavelets covered. Then they might, not inappropriately, be likened to treacherous lava incrustations, skimming a hell beneath. Connie was doubly mindful not to trust his feet upon their deceptive surfaces. *Such accidental* reliance would have resulted *disastrously in more* ways than one.

The two windows mentioned, were fixed and small. But, fortunately, most of the glass squares had been broken, and a breath of air found ingress occasionally. This condition gave also the wasps free privilege. Many of these busy little creatures lived in this place. Their tiny mud domiciles were dotted, here and there, upon the rafters above.

Besides company of this kind, Connie had flies and spiders. Spiders above and spiders below! All busily engaged; all bent upon entrapping the unwary. Thus even the garret maintained the general character of the house.

Here it is, then, that Connie remains with Crissie, waiting until his mother shall call him: or until he knows that Burle has gone from Twenty-eight.

A two-months' deprivation of brisk air and healthful light have sadly inroaded baby's fresh rosiness. Her eyes, like drooping violets, are lifting up a sad asking. The round beauty of face and limb, the gleeful frolic, the ardent baby buoyancy; these have departed. Notwithstanding his mother's and Connie's surreptitious avoidance of the letter of Burle's cruel regime, the once "pretty little Crissie" has now become "pitiful little Crissie." Confinement and ill-conditioned food have indeed told sorrowfully upon her.

Connie was distressed. He plainly saw the change. Baby's hand sought the same cozy covert in his neck; but it was now a languid hand, and its feeble nestling brought tears to the boy's eyes.

In a sad preoccupied way he lulled the child, humming in cautious pianissimo some uncertain impromptu, *while his mind* was engaged busily devising: this plan; *then another.*

Should he dare all, and take the baby to the nearest police station? Such a course certainly would end the trouble, in so far as the child was concerned. Then his thoughts advanced another step, and he beheld himself detained, his identity inquired into, and as a result, his mother taken in charge.

A plan for leaving the child on some doorstep next suggested: but again came an uncertainty. This time as affecting baby. Would those who might find her do well or ill by her?

Furthermore, did not this look like cowardice and bad faith? Had not he, Connie Stanhope, promised this helpless little creature, who had discovered such loving dependent affection for him, that he would "stand by her"? "And behold, I am planning a desertion!" Such were his thoughts, though not exactly in the language given.

> And thus his mind ran to and fro;
> Planning what was in turn turned o'er,
> Until rejection of the whole
> Left him as doubtful as before.

"I'll talk it over with mother;" he sighed, and thus finally concluded. Next he wondered if the way was clear to descend.

Some wraps lay upon the floor. Mrs. Stanhope had provided them for baby's bed. He would first get dear little sweetheart to sleep, and then creep to the scuttle and explore: and again he addressed to the child,

> Softly singing,
> Gently swaying,
> *For-ward*, back-ward,
> *As he sat* upon the floor.

* * THEN HE SAT VERY STILL, CLOSE BESIDE HER, HIS KNEES *CLASPED* ABOUT, SUPPORTING HIS CHIN. (Page 183.)

And the substance, though perhaps not the language of the chant, as he addressed in soft monotone murmur to the wasting little weakling, was,

Dearie Daisy; pretty ways sh' has for ragged Connie:
And he loves her; will protect her; precious little Dollie!

Then pausing in his lullaby motion, he looked sadly down into the child's wasting face:

All the flush, the pretty color, fading fast away!
All the brightness, all the sparkle, all her dancing play;
Going——so——fast! And now her Connie wishes every day
That he knew how he might save her:

Save her from these shadows grey.

The languid little hands are still: the baby impulses have yielded to the hushing influence: the child's eyes are droopingly closed. He kissed a cheek softly; and tearfully too, for his heart was heavy. After a few moments he laid her gently down upon the wraps: then he sat very still, close beside her, his knees clasped about, supporting his chin.

The wasps buzzed, coming and going in flights to and from their curious nests. Sometimes one would alight near, walk about, flash its purple wings up and down saying, "I'm very happy and contented, little boy; why is *your* face so doleful?"

And Connie would look abstractedly at this miniature mud-house builder, and reply in his mind, "Because I can't seem to persuade my mamma; nor get my precious sweetheart away in safety."

Sometimes a careless fly, caught in a web, would *buzz out a* tiny scream for help. Whereupon Connie *always got up* and crawled cautiously across the rafters *to the rescue.* He couldn't endure to sit still, unre-

sponsive, and know that even a fly was suffering in the toils of its enemy. For this reason the spiders above in common with the spider below, looked upon him and his obtrusive interferences, with grim malevolence.

Meantime the rapidly sickening infant slumbered in troubled lethargy above, and the boy's mother lay insensible upon the floor below, and God yet withheld to smite the cruel occasioner of all this woe!

Suddenly there arose a commotion down-stairs: a trampling of many feet. The noise approached, and Connie crept toward the scuttle. He had not forgotten to draw the ladder safely up, nor in putting back the rickety cover, to fix it securely down. He looked now with some trepidation, but nevertheless with great curiosity, through the cracks, upon the scene taking place below.

Two policemen are resolutely pushing their way up. The mob scrambles before and pushes from behind; but as yet in ignorance. Nevertheless, "Something must be up"; and this crowd demands to know, "What's the row?"

Ah well! Not much—for Island Number Ten!

There lives a fiery tempered and a fiery haired woman in the last room on this top floor. "Her husband——"

The crowd jeer derisively:

Well, then! The man, the *fellow* that she "lives" with, (he is that hot Italian; black hair, black eyes, and a black temper; such as they sometimes have;) this man is in the habit of issuing forth in the early grey of each morning with sack and hook in quest of rags. The woman *is of* Irish descent. In the absence *of all moral restraint*, such a union was productive of *ing but harmony.* The habitual contention ha

been in progress the night before. It lulled only after both contestants had gotten so drunk that they could no longer fight.

The Italian, recovering first, went out in the early glimmer of morning, as usual, on his rounds for rags.

When the woman afterwards awoke from *her* sleep of torpor, her baby lay dead under her!

Some one had informed: and now—"the cops."

They have secured her, paying very little attention to threats, remonstrances or curses; and one now starts with his charge to elbow a way out. The other lifts the pitiful remnant of stunted shattered humanity, and essays to follow. The staring eyes of the dead infant look blankly up into Connie's face as the officers repass on their way down.

Now that the whole matter is understood, many of the inmates, with short comment and no further interest, disperse to their several rooms. Others follow with careless motive to guy at the drunken purposeless struggles of the woman; or to steal, with diseased curiosity, another look at the lifeless infant.

When the dead child's face had seemed to look up at him, Connie had started backward, terrified. He covered hastily the small peep hole that he had made, and resumed his watch of the sleeping Crissie. The noise died away and all again was quiet.

CHAPTER XIV.

WILL NOT THE STATE HELP HER?

"*Get up*, you are shamming——"

The appellative is not fitting for repetition. Burle *had returned* after his first cruel assault upon Jane, and

now he stood over her, uttering curses and vile denunciations. Finally he kicked her with a brutal insensibility. She turned upon the floor, and her white blank face, looked helplessly upward.

Desisting from this cruel method, he adopted another; one which gratified his spleen while it also acted as a rude restorative. Seizing a water pail, he filled it from the sink near by, and with a tin dipper, dashed cupful after cupful at the inanimate accusing face. There was a devilish tact of brutality even in this, for he maliciously exerted his strength to fling it at her with vengeful vehemence.

> The wanderer sleeps with face turned to the unfriendly sky. The cold has stiffened her limbs; and now the rain is falling. It soaks her hair; it drenches her ragged clothing, and she shivers in her dreams.
>
> A thousand times more merciful that benumbing cold, a thousand times more compassionate that chilling rain to that hapless fugitive, than to Jane Stanhope are the miserable fates that environ her miserable destiny!

She stirs at last and half raises her contused drenched body. The wet hair hangs in clinging masses about her bruised face.

"*Will* you get up, you treacherous drab?" Thus again he snarls at her; at the same time aiming another dipper full at her uncertain wandering face.

She gasps back to partial consciousness and struggles to her feet. She staggers, half-blinded, toward the arm-chair. She drops into it helplessly.

Her body sways and totters; and lest she fall forward upon *her face, he* rudely pushes the table before *her. It is not done too* soon. She is able now, by

means of the assistance thus afforded, to support herself in her seat.

Slowly she regains herself. Her eyes recovef a suffering intelligence, and once more she has drearily awakened to conscious perception.

Then he came forward. He smote with his fist a blow upon the table before her. After this punishment: "*Now* do you promise to give over this infernal Sunday-school nonsense?"

She looked at him waveringly.

"Answer me!" he demanded vehemently.

She appeared to gather herself, as for a desperate effort. Twice she opened her lips. Then, as though faltering in an effort to avow some resolution, she sighed heavily and remained silent.

A pan of dry flour stood on the table: Burle, continuing to stand threateningly before her, impatiently waited the revocation which he demanded. His eyes fell upon the flour, and grasping a handful, he flung it squarely into her face. He stamped his foot and hissed with newly kindling rage, "*Will* you—*answer* me?"

The white substance clung in her dripping hair; it smeared her wet and bruise-blackened face; it trickled in clammy adhesive stickiness down into her neck. The indignity, added to the brutality, was exasperating. She spit the wet paste from her mouth, and starting forward passionately in her chair, almost screamed at him.

"No!"

For the moment he was cowed, disconcerted.

She went on, as energetically as her condition permitted, and before he had sufficiently recovered, found *opportunity to* utter this desperate declaration:

"*For years,* Cluff Burle, I have been your tool.

Horrible work you have given me. In curses and blows you have recompensed me. You have dragged me down until my soul is pitted and my nature scarred with the badness of vile accomplishings. I *curse* you now for it all. But if I strive against it to my last breath, God Almighty help me, you shall *not* have my boy. My—God," and she raised her face and wavering hands.

She was allowed time for no more. He sprang forward. The prayer she would have sent up was clutched and throttled in its utterance. With one hand at her throat and the other buried in her hair, in utter and wanton malignity of purpose, and exerting a vengeful force, he bore her head rudely downward until her cheek pressed with the contact of a heavy blow upon the wooden table before her.

She moaned and struggled, but was too weak from injury already sustained to escape from him. She strained to turn, that she might *look* an appeal she could not speak. But he set his teeth, impelling even a more cruel gravity, and continued to hold her fast.

Insensibility came, once more, to the poor creature's relief; and then her limp flaccid form settled passively away from this brutal contact.

Releasing now the inanimate body, he stood up, the better to contemplate his devilish achievement. Not a hint of remorse or regret offered on that demon face. It was marked, rather, by a yet unsatiated vengefulness.

Her head lay forward upon the table. Presently the white smeared disfigured face, slowly turned upward; the mouth fell partially open, and a gasp escaped like a fluttering soul from a dying breast.

But this "woman-beater" was still the coward. *They are all and always cowards.*

And now terror took possession of his craven heart.

lest he had, this time indeed, crushed and extinguished the throb of life beyond resuscitation!

O God, that Thou canst delay Thy vengence!

Witness forever against him, ye hurt bleeding lips, appealing upward!

Behold the glossy disorder of that marvelous hair, sweeping dishevelled across the table! Hands, which can no longer supplicate for mercy—mercy that never yet has been shown, though so often they have been raised in appeal, asking it—now falling, nerveless, downward!

With all her faults is she not white in her dying soul, as compared with the now shrinking dastardly blot, that has so smirched her life? Why is he yet permitted to remain, throwing his dark dishonoring shadow across her helpless stricken form? What ingenuity of conceit can contrive an adequate and fitting punishment for such monstrous atrocity!

Nevertheless, it is such travesty upon every attribute of manhood; it is such out-bruting of lowest brutality; it is such excess of fiend-heartedness that, *saith the great State of New York*, through its honorable majority of members, in Legislature assembled, must not be punished—corporeally! Shall be dealt with, *only* as a case of—common assault!

We are thankful, in this behalf, to note the superior wisdom of Maryland. This State has discovered the only sure and *certain measure of restraint* for cowardly wife-beaters. It is a method which appeals through their cringing cuticles. The Legislature of that Commonwealth, the way suggested, had the independence, *not to say* the common sense, after rejecting foolish *argument about* a "return to barbarism," to authorize a *public whipping*-post for such iniquity. There it is

that a discretionary number of cuticular remonstrances, well scourged on, serve a fitting future dissuader, for such untamed brutality. If this is "barbarism revived," then we would revive it to meet barbarity!

The fellow is then sent back to provide, as he should, for the support of his family. If he presumes to repeat the cruelty, the Court is presumed to repeat the dose; probably with such admonitory increase as abundantly certifies the purpose.

The law which imprisons for this offense, *has not served the desired end.* Furthermore, such a disposition not only leaves the wife with a mutilated body, but adds new hardship to what already has been suffered. It compels the Court to say (in effect) to the woman, "You have suffered cruelly, but we must add to your misery. The law directs that we now deprive you of your husband's support. We are about to shut him up; and you must go, therefore, and take care of yourself and little ones for the next ninety days—or starve." (See Note)

* * * * * *

Was she dead?

His heart quaked with a sickly trepidation.

He touched her, now with hesitating hand; and at the contact as though even inanimate, she would shun him, the limp passive form slid from table and chair; then, settling like a solemn accusation, sank slowly upon the floor.

Thoroughly stricken now with fear, he sprang away. Transferring the key to the outside, he closed and

NOTE.—A bill to revive the whipping-post, FOR WIFE-BEATERS ONLY, was very lately proposed in the New York Legislature. The author of this book was called upon for reports of cruelty to wives, at the hands of their husbands. *He gave many, instancing* the most atrocious brutality. Nevertheless *the measure was opposed*, and finally defeated, as being a "return to *the hands of barbarism.*"

locked the door behind him. Then he fled abjectly; forgetting in the haste of his craven precipitate departure, to remove and take the key with him.

Stumbling along confusedly toward the descent, he reached the stairway at the moment corresponding to the passing, at that point, of the policeman with the corpse of the child. He jostled blindly against the officer, fairly thrusting his bleary puffy eyes into the dead upturned face of the miserable infant. Then he recoiled with new terror and more curses, and again plunged forward in another direction, losing himself finally in the crowd which idly followed to gloat upon this sickening spectacle.

CHAPTER XV.

MOTHER AND SON.

CONNIE yet lingered to contemplate the sleeping child. "Precious little Daisy! Where have all your rosy cushions gone! But she is sleeping soundly, and now I have a good chance to run down and see mother."

Poor lad! He little knew! But we will follow him.

He raised the scuttle cautiously: lowered the ladder: climbed down five or six steps. Then, after replacing the scuttle cover, he descended to the floor below.

Next he took away the ladder and secreted it in an unoccupied room near the stair-head. This done, he stole cautiously further down: one flight—two flights—*three flights*; and now he is approaching Number *Twenty-eight* upon the third floor.

"Rather unusual;" is his thought, as he notes the key upon the outside. He does not touch it though. He does not enter as with accustomed privilege. No such liberty is permitted; and under the circumstances, as respects the practices which go on in Number Twenty-eight, there are frequent times when such a freedom would result in embarrassment. Therefore he bends cautiously down and listens.

Not a sound! "Has mother gone out?"

He listens again; and now, threaded in with the monotonous ticking of the clock, he can further distinguish a sobbing respiration: a labored breathing, as though endeavored only with pain.

He is alarmed, and his first impulse is to hasten in precipitately: but again he hesitates.

Standing thus undecided, there presents to his startled imagination the picture of his mother; pressed down, perhaps, under the griping clutch of Burle, and only able to signal her distress in extremity by this stifled sigh. His heart turns faint: he dare not delay. To whose arm, beyond his, weak though it be, can his mother look for rescue? He must go in; and summoning courage he attempts to enter.

But the door is locked!

Remembering now the key, which a moment since caught his eye, he reflects with increasing alarm, "It must have been locked upon the outside!" He hastens to turn back the bolt, and then quickly but silently pushes the door open before him.

O Connie! The dreadful, the pitiful sight!

His heart sinks, but he makes no outcry. He the more hastens to get within the room, at the same time removing *the key and adjusting* it to the inside. This *done he hurriedly closes* and locks the door.

"Who has struck his mother down?"

He knows, well enough! No need to put questions about this.

With sinking trepidation he approaches. She may be dying! He stoops quickly over her.

Now he is upon his knees: his trembling fingers examine her poor head: he softly moves it. Great sobs shake him and he struggles to control them.

Suddenly his heart stands still; for at the moment, her deathlike face, under his hesitating hand, has turned toward him. Looking once more, a fainting terror almost overcomes him; for now the blood upon her mouth is revealed. But summoning a desperate courage, he bends down to her ear and whispers, "Mother!"

No answer: no response!

Then nearer: this time his mouth close to her ear, "*Dear* mother!"

Yet, no sign. He tremblingly places his hand over her heart. He waits in an agony of uncertainty. . . . . "Yes;" with a sob of relief.

He rose and ran to the faucet; procured a basin of cold water, a towel; then quickly returned to her side. He gently washed away the blood from her lips: he cleansed her rigid face from the particles of wet flour that disfigured it.

Now he sees more plainly the marks of the cruel blows. His tears fall fast, but he works rapidly, silently.

Soon he succeeds in raising her head, and he holds it carefully, tenderly, against his breast, continuing all *the time* to bathe and lave it with the water. He untangles *and* pushes back the heavy clinging hair.

Then he calls again in her ear, "Mother—darling; won't you speak to me—now?"

While he holds and implores her thus, slowly moving his body backward and forward, as though this motion might help to rouse her, she sighs drearily and at last slowly opens her eyes upon him.

Weary, weary eyes! They regard Connie with a misty confusion; and it is only after many fond caresses, many whispered love beseechings, that conscious perception and a realization of present conditions return to her.

When at last she fully awakens to her misery, and the dreary reality sweeps once more upon her crippled intelligence, she weakly clasps her arms around her little boy and tries to hide her broken face upon his breast.

Supporting her thus, Connie pleaded again, as many times he had pleaded before. Why would she not put aside forever, the cruel measure of misery that Burle pressed upon her?

"Come with me, mother. I'll take little Daisy. We'll run away together. Please say you will. If you *could* only see—your—face! Do say you will."

Her head was still in his arms; and as she thus lay, half upon the floor, half supported by her little boy, she appeared to listen for the first time with a favoring assent. She looked up to him, and into her sad eyes, wounded and broken as she was, there came a touching, an abiding fondness.

Suddenly a change came upon her. Perhaps there arose condemning accusation. Perhaps she felt remorse in realizing her son's affection, notwithstanding the *association she imposed* with Burle's soul-degrading *practices.*

And what recompense had she fo
keeper: what return for thus shutt
away? Burle's neglect! Nay, wors
abuse of her, albeit all the sacrifice
science that she made for him!

This was her own child, her loving
so earnestly that she abandon this
before had he thus entreated. Th
mained silent to those appeals. Th
tinued with, as though she preferre
cursed both her and the child; that
her fault, now so tenderly nursed
times indeed had she restrained and
tion within her, in condoning a cruel
ful one!

Granted that it *was* terror of Bu
rupted her active interference, she
this forced collusion. She could
flight. How was it possible for
avoid also responsibility for the u
suffering that she so often witnessed
boy?

So harshly did she accuse herself
that a feverish exaggeration outr
measure of strict accountability; and
self as a merciless accessory in all t
ment that Connie had endured at
wicked companion. She was hear
how wicked had been her repressio
pulses as toward this loving boy;
trition she struggled to sit free fi
held her only the closer.

He sought to quiet her, as one mi
hugging her up to him, and mu

"Poor little mother! Precious head! Soft hair!" and he kissed it.

The kiss threw her into more passionate self-accusation. Its effect was as a removal of the last restraint when Moses smote the rock in Horeb, and the waters gushed forth.

"O Conrad!" she vehemently burst out, "Don't you hate me? What have I done but drag you down to misery? Oh *let* me go! Your kisses scorch me."

The big tears stood in his eyes, but he obediently opened his arms.

With sudden revulsion, and a great affection she caught him back. She strained him hard, hard to her breast!

"My God, I have not deserved him!"

Connie yielded passively with troubled awe. He dared make no response. Indeed these lamentations were addressed to God. Anguishing contrition, keen, cutting, condemning, now loosed and swept its tide over her. She was whelmed in throes of incriminating remorse.

Turning from her son, she sprang forward into a kneeling posture. The long black hair, unconfined, went sweeping down in confusion along the floor. Her face was lifted, her appeal directed upward. Her arms stretched in tense strained effort, and the hands clasped in convulsive pressure above her head. Then, as under the spell of some powerful suasion, controlled by an impulse beyond herself, she broke forth: her voice wailing brokenly; the words, coming sometimes haltingly, but always tearfully, half-desperately, as she cried in passionate appeal,

"O *God in heaven, have* mercy on my soul! Where *I wandered! Oh,* so far! This false deceitful

life! What has it brought me? Ashes! Ashes! Please, God, is there no hope for me?"

Then, after a pause, but in a more subdued and sorrowful petition, her hands dropped and pressed hard against her breast:

"O Jesus, won't You think on me one little moment! Give me *one* glimpse of light!" Again she was silent, as though waiting; listening. Then finally, with deepest dejection,

"There is no answer. All seems black about me. No white hand——"

Her voice died away.

Falling prone upon the floor, her arms extended, her hands still clasped, she hid her flushed disfigured face.

Connie was awe-stricken. He trembled in fear at her passionate vehemence.

His eyes, with hers, had sympathetically been raised: and with her he had gone out from self; and with her he had continued to gaze strainingly upward, as though, while despairing, notwithstanding tremulously hoping that some Divine token would be manifested in answer to her impassioned cry.

But when, concluding, she hid her face upon the floor, then he gathered and once more collected his mind; as one recovers from a temporary bewildered outgoing.

He looked up toward God, as loth yet to relinquish hope of answer to his mother's supplication, with also a silent added imploration of his own.

The room was still. Very still! Death might have been present there.

But outside conditions began to resume, and soon *again his ear took* cognizance of moving feet and lum*bering trucks*, as the ordinary traffic along the street

once more asserted. The sounds at first made a far-off impression. It was as though God had removed them during the sending up of that anguishing prayer; not until its end to be again allowed intrusion.

Connie's look, falling now again, rested upon the form of his mother. She had not stirred. No motion evidenced consciousness. Might he go now to her? Should he?

Maintaining his sitting posture, he edged carefully along the floor. He reached her side.

Her forehead, damp with moisture, but no longer flushed and hot, lay exposed above the arm that hid her face. The black hair, so often caressed by him, fell away in confusion upon her shoulders. His heart went out to her, oh, so tearfully, fervently, lovingly! "*My* mother! She thinks she is bad! Such a naughty woman! I don't think so. Does God think so?" and his eyes instinctively and inquiringly went upward again.

Growing more confident, he cosily pressed closer to her side. He wove his fingers softly through her damp hair. His loving palm pressed for a moment upon her forehead; it passed gently backward, smoothing the tangled glossiness away from brow and shoulders.

The soothing influence of his hands; the fingers, furrowing and weaving through her hair; gently, slowly; pressed caressingly; again and again finding thus their way back over her forehead; over her head; down the length of the long silk-like covering lying in profusion along her prostrate form: all this calmed her.

She lay, *though, without* response or motion for a *long time, while Connie* thus fondled her. She real- *a longing to* remain thus forever; neverthele

she felt an uneasy remorse in yielding to such sweet content.

Her thoughts were very busy. She had pleaded desperately for a hand—a hand to lift the veil and let light into her soul; her wistful-to-be repentant soul!

Suddenly, a startled thought! A revelation came. Had God vouchsafed the token? Had God answered her prayer? Aye: the hand rested upon her! It was her child's hand! It was a loving hand; and with sudden palpitating acknowledgment, as though a bar of light had flashed knowledge of succor into the dark about her, she recognized the guidance that she had prayed for.

Then came the quiver of self-distrust. Hesitation to take the hand: for oh, how long would be the journey back! How much to fight and overcome! From what depths must she climb!

Yes: God had appointed her own child the saviour of his mother. Would she not hasten and accept the loving rescue?

The hand once more came back to press upon her forehead: to weave its way down through her hair. Many such loving journeys had it taken. With swelling thankfulness, with beating hopefulness she caught that hand. She held it fast. She pressed her wounded lips to it. The fervor of the act promised indeed an earnest of repentance. It was sealed with a crimson witness, impressed upon the token that she now accepted of God.

Connie sought to raise his mother's head.

But—no!

She would not look at him. Not yet: she could not.

Command over voice, and heart, and tears; it was not quite hers.

With face yet hidden; with clasp of hands upon his hand, she sought to ask him—

What?

Should she? Dared she? Summoning resolve, she began in smothered tones: "Dear Connie——"

Tears instantly filled the boy's eyes: but he would not interrupt her. He waited with palpitating hope:

"Dear Connie;—may I—will you let me go with you to—to the beautiful lady—the beautiful lady of the Sunday-school?"

Alas! Why did she not act upon this prompting? Why did she not go—*at once!*

CHAPTER XVI.

HIDDEN CIRCUMSTANCE.

Doctor Jourdan and Jip associate together in the detective business.

In the heart of the Sierras, Uncle Josh spent the best part of his life, industriously but unsuccessfully delving after silver, when untold values of that metal lay hidden in the masses of rock scattered in profusion about his door yard.

Our good grandmothers have been known to search assiduously for spectacles, which meantime reposed, half concealed, in the silver gloss of their own unconscious heads. Secrets are often best hidden, when the least demonstration made in covering them.

An oscitant guard is sometimes better than an ostentatious one.

Mrs. Clifford numbered, among her little Sunday-school scholars, one boy who greatly interested her. Had she asked this boy the one simple question, did he know of a sweet baby girl with loving brown eyes, who had been cruelly stolen; there is no doubt but that he would eagerly, though perhaps apprehensively, have revealed what her heart was agonizing to know.

Had Connie, upon his part, perceived in this sweet patient-faced woman, who drew his heart so gently, the sorrowful and sorrowing mother of his drooping little sweetheart, he would have hastened to speak words that would have been like heavenly music to her ears.

Had Dr. Jourdan pursued inquiry concerning a lost child, among his charity patients in Island Number Ten, some one of them, no doubt, would quietly have possessed him with information that thousands of dollars, applied in official quarters, had thus far failed to bring through official channels.

Thus, through the immutability of hidden circumstance, we wait unconsciously upon the threshold of startling *denouement*. Without a hint or thought of their propinquity, we hasten upon crises that, within a brief "inch of time," make or mar along the extent of all time.

Such, at the present situation, is the perplexing contrariety of incident.

For two months past has Mr. Harrington, public advertisements through the papers excepted, tried every measure suggested; explored every clue. He has been lavish in money with detectives both official and

private: but, as yet, (with no discredit whatever to them), all are now as much in the dark concerning little Crissie, as when first her mysterious disappearance was reported. Knowing what we do of the situation, we are able to understand the pith of the saying, "It is always easy to tell where a thing *could* have been found, *after* it *has* been found!"

With continued hopefulness in the wisdom of Inspector Allen's "secret-hunt" theory, Mr. Harrington has deferred, as yet, any public notice of the abduction. Many times the officers have appeared certainly to be upon the sure line of discovery. But all such expectancies, thus far, have only led into the *cul de sac* of groping uncertainty.

Meantime Jip has kept his eyes, his ears and every alert faculty, constantly employed.

"Jog along;" he absently admonished to his horse. The horrible heptachord of bells made dismal dissonance; and sometimes he added his voice, interjecting,

"RAGS! RAGS!"

But all the time he was scanning every window; looking for that one baby face. All the time his mind was laboring, puzzling over one or another probable or improbable solution of the mysterious disappearance.

After the day's completed rounds had brought him home again, he would give old Blimber his supper, hurriedly swallow his own, and then spend half the night delving and prying about in tenement localities; hoping to "Drop onta sumph'n." For two months the poor fellow has thus patiently been on the *qui vive:* but thus far to *no purpose.*

casionally he stole into the stable where Fury was

cared for. Here he talked the matter over with Dennis. After a little urging Dennis would make some errand to the house, and perhaps bring Letty back with him.

Then she in turn would eagerly question. But thus far Jip could only reply,

"Ha'n't caught on yet."

But Jip had genuine perseverance. He was not one whit discouraged, in the sense which deters. Truly this was a wonderful fellow for keeping everybody's courage up!

One evening Mrs. Clifford learned of his presence at the stable. She sent for him. Letty brought him into the dining-room.

"Evenin' mum;" he accosted, with a quick dip of his head, in response to her kind address.

"Ah Jip," (she adopted the "Jip" as sweetly in his behalf as though such a "flip" name was an every day familiarity with her,) "you don't hear anything yet of our precious little Crissie?"

"Ha'n't drop'd onta nuth'n yet, mum;" he reluctantly admitted.

"Noth—ing at—all?" she sighed sorrowfully, looking upward and away from him. The low beseeching tone and the silently implied appeal, symbolized a sad pleading which now almost constantly she addressed to heaven. Why was the rescue so—long delayed! This anxiety and suspense! They wore cruelly upon her.

"But I'm no chicken cully. Like 'nough, 'fore y' know't, I'll chug onta sumph'n that'll make us all cock-a-hoop."

Mrs. Clifford looked helplessly to Letty.

"*He means*," interpreted Jip's sweetheart, "that

perhaps he'll soon discover something that will put us all in hopeful spirits."

"But not anything yet?" despondingly queried Mrs. Clifford; slowly motioning also the "not anything" with her head.

"Not a wink: not a tip:" admitted Jip; but not with any loss of confidence. "But you wait er while. Mebbe I'll git there yet—with both feet."

A bright thought suggested. Mrs. Clifford looked up with animation; "Do you know Dr. Jourdan?"

"Heerd ov 'im;" answered Jip.

Mrs. Clifford continued, as in explanation: "*He* is also looking everywhere for darling little Crissie."

"Yes 'um?" nodded Jip questioningly, and waiting further confidence.

"Don't you think—" and then she hesitated. Perhaps Dr. Jourdan would not be pleased with her suggestion of this associate. However her better appreciation of his good sense prevailed, and she went on:

"Perhaps in some way you could both work together. He might suggest to *you*. Very likely you could aid *him*." She turned inquiringly toward Letty.

"Jip has a pert head and a willing heart, ma'am. He wants to do all he can. I told him—" hesitating, "I told him I never could marry him," and here the tears threatened, "and darling baby not found. Yes," recovering herself, "he's quick and ready. He'll do anything the doctor says."

"Yes 'um;" eagerly ratified Jip.

"I think," now joined Mrs. Clifford speaking slowly, as though she had not quite made up her mind, "I think perhaps Letty, that you might take your friend around, and introduce *him*."

Then she further meditated upon this conclusion, as

though unsettled as to the perfect propriety of suggesting Jip as a co-worker with Dr. Jourdan. But, as before, her innate confidence in the doctor's common sense prevailed, and she repeated to Letty, who still delayed, waiting her mistress' final determination, "Yes; take him with you Letty. Say to Dr. Jourdan that my anxiety makes no halt at conventionalities."

It was between eight and nine in the evening, and the doctor was found at home. He sat in a well furnished office adjoining the patients' reception-room. Callers had departed and he was smoking a cigar. His mind, as had been usual of late in a moment of leisure, was upon Mrs. Clifford. He was inwardly expressing regret at the unsuccess of efforts to recover her child. "What next shall we do?" was the burden of his mental devising.

Now the said Dr. Jourdan was eager to advance his friendly status with the aforesaid Isabel Clifford. He *had* done so to an extent; and perhaps he realized in this emergency that her further kind favor could not better be propitiated than in continued effort to find little Crissie. On account of the loss of her child, she was in deepest grief; and her whole soul and being were engrossed, at present, in the one absorbing ever-controlling motive of recovery.

Could he be instrumental in restoring her little one, what better prefatory commendation to Isabel's amity! All this motived, in addition to that neighborly interest which naturally would impel him, in wishing and working to rescue the child.

Isabel was not aware that in this presentation she was accomplishing just what Dr. Jourdan, at that *particular juncture*, doubly wished for. Through Jaques, *his driver, to* whom Dennis had related the story, he

had been informed concerning Jip's hopeful devoted ness and persistent constancy in ever looking for th lost Crissie. He had quietly investigated the boy' antecedents. Being pleased and satisfied, he was re volving in mind how best to introduce and entrust t him a plan of his own for the recovery of the chil That plan required just such an assistant as Jip's facu ties promised, and in just such a character as his cal ing facilitated.

It will be understood then that the doctor was we pleased to receive Jip; and especially to know tha Isabel Clifford had sent him. He was glad to lear that her motive coincided with his already formed pla It was especially pleasing furthermore, through th adoption of an aid sent by Isabel Clifford, to associat a pleasurable sentiment of participation with her. An Jip too, was quite happy in being introduced by Lett

The reader will understand that the secret unde current of influence, which to great degree stimulate both these plotters for good, (the lad and the doctor although along the lines of widely separated soci planes, was nevertheless a similar one, to wit: the fav of a woman. But we must state the truth and say th the contingent conditional, was rather better defined i Jip's than in the doctor's case.

Letty, with some diffidence, had performed her e rand; and the doctor sat studying Jip. Very soon l asked him to retire into the adjoining reception-roo Turning to the young girl,

"If I take Jip into my confidence Letty, I must kno all about him."

"Yes sir; he is a very good young man:" she bas fully replied.

Dr. Jourdan smiled. "I understand so. Does not an engagement exist between you two?"

"Yes sir:" with some color.

"Then *you* trust him, and think that I may do so also?"

Letty replied with animation, giving the particulars of the young junk and rag-dealer's independent search during the past weeks. She related her knowledge of Jip's business, and of his general reputation among her own friends. Not that she gave all this connectedly: the doctor drew it from her by suggestive inquiries.

"I think," her interrogator now concluded, "that he is just the kind of lieutenant I shall want. Please call him back: and then, as I wish to talk alone with him, you may return, with my respectful regards to Mrs. Clifford, and say that I am very glad to accept and avail of Jip's services. I thank her for sending him to me."

The lad was recalled, and Letty, as requested, took her leave.

"Take a chair;" invited Dr. Jourdan, looking about for one: "I want to talk privately with you."

Jip showed his willingness to deserve the confidence promised, as well as his appreciation of the distinction conferred. He was all attention.

"You are a smart young lad?"

"Yes sir;" agreed Jip very promptly.

"Do you think that you could do a careful little piece of detective work, as connected with the loss of this child?"

"Yes sir:" just as promptly as assumptively. Jip had great confidence in—Jip. He was intent now upon *learning what* the doctor had to propose.

"I want you to do this work *alone*," pursued Dr. Jourdan, "and I want no one else to know of it."

"All right. I'm fly. I'm your chum;" consented Jip. The doctor understood him and continued:

"I have thought of a possibility, which, since I've turned it about in mind, seems more likely a *probability*, and it *may* prove to be——"

Jip's evident effort at mental concentration in following this preface, as plainly outlined in the wrinkles coming one after another about his eyes, across his forehead, and screwed up in the tightening muscles around his mouth, admonished the physician that he adopt simpler language. He changed his method accordingly.

"You know there are a great many poor people in the city?"

"Oh yes;" Jip acquiesced, relieved. Not much depth of observation required to enable one to perceive that characteristic of Brooklyn! Neither, in getting at it, was there any "probability" or "possibility" to puzzle over.

"I suppose you also know," pursued the doctor, "that many of these people simulate—*pretend* to be suffering, when they are not."

"You mean the bams; the scrapers?"

The wrinkles changed faces. It was the doctor's turn.

"The chippers for a fye-buck?" next suggested Jip.

The doctor's collapse was certainly impending. Jip hurried in an earnest effort to catch him;

"Th' cheats; th' shams; th' small funks?" he hastily supplemented.

Dr. Jourdan looked up hopefully: "Yes; the 'cheats;' *the 'shams.'* Those who 'make a crooked 'lh,' *as I've heard* the expression, and deceive for

purposes of obtaining aid. In short, those who make a 'regular thing,' a 'professional business' of shaming a misery for the purpose of getting 'alms-money'."

This mutual understanding being safely arrived at, Dr. Jourdan advanced another step.

"Now, don't you know that some of these people go about with little babies? Poor suffering emaciated little creatures they are, who have been starved down; shriveled up by exposure. And this condition has purposely been brought about, so that when paraded they may the more deeply appeal to a pitiful commiseration?"

Jip's face assumed a very sympathetic and also a very intelligent look. He "twigged" the doctor "to a hair," (so he told him), and he hastily interjected, by way of further encouragement, and to show that he understood,

"Yes; so's people'll give 'em more money! I've seen lots 'f 'em on th' streets."

"You have?" the doctor queried earnestly. "Do you know the names of any of these wicked people, or where they live?"

"I knowed some of 'em;" Jip replied.

"Where do they get these suffering little creatures?" next asked Dr. Jourdan. Not but that he himself *knew*. He preferred to lead Jip along to an understanding of his scheme, in an interlocutory way: also in this manner, quietly to judge of the lad's knowledge and promised capacity for the difficult work at which he meant to put him.

Intelligence shone from Jip's eyes; he answered, "Why, 'f course! Some uv 'em steals 'em. Some uv *'em borrers 'em fer* pay 'f those who has stole 'em.

And some uv 'em is cru'l 'nough t' fix th' own young uns th't way."

"Now do you begin to understand me?" the doctor asked, significantly.

"You bet th' whole pile in y'r dummy;" Jip enthusiastically assured.

"Very well. But, Jip," further proceeded the doctor, "you couldn't probably identify—you wouldn't know Mrs. Clifford's child, if you *should* run across it?"

Jip's face fell. The wrinkles came again, and with one hand he dug energetically all over his head, as stimulating and searching some solution to this awkward proposition. The doctor said nothing to help him, but waited curiously. He was anxious to know how Jip would meet such a perplexing exigent.

"Well," finally proposed Jip, "couldn't yer giv' me 'er signals? What's 'er eyes, 'nd 'er hair, 'nd such like?"

"Wouldn't aid you very much Jip;" replied the doctor, sorrowfully shaking his head. "Aside from the rapid change always going on in a child during its second year, the alteration which abuse or deceptive tact might effect, these would set at naught any description of two or three months ago; for then the child was in perfect health. Furthermore, I understand that you have never specially taken notice of the baby."

Jip's continually falling countenance acknowledged a silent and quite distressful concurrence. The doctor electrified him now by saying,

"But I will tell you how you can, most certainly and positively, identify little Crissie."

Jip sat bolt upright. His wandering hand quickly *down and struck* smartly on his knee. Th

wrinkles disappeared in a flash, and he asked promptly and earnestly,

"How?"

"By a small India-ink star, upon the inner lobe of each ear;" and Dr. Jourdan explained further by showing the corresponding places upon his own ears.

"Couldn't they be tuken off?" debated the cautious Jip.

"Not without leaving scars. And should you notice such scars upon the ears of some little forlorn waif, you should lose no time in summoning a policeman. If no officer was within call, you would have to think fast, and devise other measures for getting the child to a Station."

Jip was highly elated. He proposed an immediate excursion to—"som' places I knows uv."

Dr. Jourdan restrained him, saying: "Jip, I haven't yet given you the most important part of my project."

"I wuz thinkin' uv them stars;" irrelevantly interrupted Jip. "Should 'a tho't 'twould uv hurt th' baby to put 'em on."

The doctor smiled; but he deferred his lead long enough to relieve Jip's mind. "A very simple operation;" he assured. "Some time when we have leisure I will explain it to you. There was no pain to the baby. The parts were first made insensible with a tiny spray of ether."

Jip was no wiser, but he was satisfied. There had been no pain. The doctor had opportunity to resume:

"Now there are other classes of wicked people who use these little babies for evil purposes. I want you *to listen carefully, for* I am going to give you an op*portunity to exercise that* smartness which you so con*fidently assured* me you *possessed*."

Jip moved uneasily in his chair. He slowly shook his head, and in other ways manifested uncertainty and dissatisfaction. The doctor, noticing these breaking-up symptoms, interrupted himself to inquire;

"What is it, Jip? What is troubling you?"

"Y' see," began Jip. Then he paused, drew a long breath, and with a ludicrous mixture of deference and annoyance, essayed again;

"Y' see, Mr. Doctor; I want t' ketch on t' every thing yer say: an' som'tim's y'r gammon strikes a gait that's gibberish t' me. Then I'm fogged, dead: foul'd right out. Now, fer inst'nce," with an injured look, "what's 'azured'; an' what's 'puz—' 'puzzessed'?"

Dr. Jourdan reflected. Then recurring in thought to the connection in which he had used these words, he explained,

"You said, Jip, awhile ago, that you were smart. You mean that you could 'tumble' to anything quickly." (The doctor was surprised at himself.) "You mean that you had—that you '*possessed*' a quick wit. That you could 'catch on' as you say. That you could 'twig' with a nimble——"

"Intelligence" was the word he was about to conclude with. But doubting that this was a noun down to Jip's level, he gave it up shortly and substituted pantomime; touching his forehead suggestively with his forefinger.

Jip fell into the fashion readily, and signalled back with very expressive return gestures, signifying that he understood the explanation.

"Now then," again essayed Dr. Jourdan, "I want you to use that wit of yours in looking up some of *these people of whom I* am about to tell you. They *are poor starved little* babies, but they never go

upon the streets with them. They exhibit—I mean that they 'show them up' *in their own rooms only*. Do you understand me?"

Jip nodded eagerly.

"In the first place," further explained Dr. Jourdan, "they write begging letters. And when good people respond—I mean when they get these letters, and go to see what is the matter, then these frauds, who have written them, they tuck themselves up in bed perhaps, and put on a made-up 'misery face.' And this is the time when these wicked people make a parade—'make a show' I mean, of the poor starved baby. And so the good lady who comes in, she says to herself, 'Dear me! Only look at this miserable mother and her starving child!' And then she gives some money. The more starved the child, the more money the good lady gives."

"Now yer talkin';" Jip excitingly put in with percipience. "Why, I knows just som' o' them kidney. We calls 'em 'High-Flyers'."

Dr. Jourdan's look of interest and inquiry rather indicated *his* turn at receiving an explanation. "'High-flyers'?" he repeated inquiringly. "Why do you call them 'High-flyers'?"

"'Why'?" echoed Jip, iterating the doctor's interrogatory tone. Being thus put to it, however, he was not at once prepared. He reflected a moment. Soon lifting his head he answered,

"Don't y'u know? It's 'cause they fly their kites fer high game. Them's th' ones as goes fer th' big nobs on Clint'n Aver*nu*. They takes in th' Devil scolders *too*."

Jip added the last sentence with a grin, a squint, and

a single quick dip of the head sideways, implying, "Ah, but *they're* sharp, I tell ye!"

"And pray, who are the 'Devil scolders'?" further sought the doctor with an amused smile and an exploring mind.

Jip looked up with a sudden depreciatory twitch, indicative of surprise at the ignorance betrayed by so wise a man:

"Don't y' know?"

The doctor slowly shook his head.

Jip fell into another studious introspection. Indeed he was somewhat at a loss for a synonymous term; and he stole a moment for desperate thought: finally,

"Why, I mean th' holy Joes: th' cushion smiters. Them as holds a palaver uv a Sunday in th' cackle tubs in th' big churches."

"What!" exclaimed the doctor, considerably shocked; "The clergymen; the ministers?"

"Them's th' roosters;" promptly, though not with any intentional irreverence, answered Jip; and with a cheerful air of relief that at last he was understood.

"Yes," now agreed the doctor; "they *are* especially preyed upon. But don't style a minister of Christ's gospel in such canting slang;" and he was inclined to be severe.

"I didn't mean no harm;" asseverated Jip earnestly. And it was perfectly evident that disrespect or levity was very far from his intention.

"Ah, well!" resumed the doctor, with forgiveness; "I really don't think that you did." Then he continued,

"You said *that you knew* some of the—'High-flyers'. *ou know any of the* other kind? 'Low-flyers',

for instance: I mean among the class who beg on the streets in a professional way."

"I know one or two uv 'em as sends out th' 'stool-pigeons';" suggested Jip in answer, feeling his way; and still somewhat uncertain after his rebuke, as to the propriety of his reference to "stool-pigeons".

Then he added hastily; "But *they* don't use th' babies."

"Whom or what do they use?" asked the doctor, settling himself, and becoming interested in investigating the store of Jip's "Poverty-Alley" knowledge.

"Well," commenced Jip, quite honored, and encouraged withal by the curiosity manifested, "ther's Poppy Peckham. He lives in th' 'House of Blazes'."

The doctor's forehead again showed wrinkles of mystification; seeing which, Jip parenthetically interpolated, by way of passing explanation, "That's th' big ten'ment, down on P'cific. He's got a nole blind man. Mus' be sev'nty-five. Awful lookn' ole guy! Blind's a wedge. Hands shake lik' ager. Pop plants 'im sumwhur 'long Fulton street, nigh to Johns'n, like 'nough. Squats 'im on a nole bundle, or a box, side th' walk; an' then puts iz hat 'tween iz knees. You ought'r see th' nick'ls tumble in. Ladies az com's out'r th' drygoods stores 'long there: *they* giv's 'em, mostly. Pop rakes 'em all in, *you bet!*"

"Do you know any other?" pursued Dr. Jourdan.

"Yes; I kno' a nole wom'n, too, az runs a racket on 'er own hook. She lives in Th' Buckingham."

"The '*Buck*ingham'!" remonstrated Dr. Jourdan with a strong accent of doubt, although inquiry as *well, on the* first syllable of this aristocratic name.

"*Yes, y'u kno*," began Jip, as though referring to a

place familiar to every body, "it's jus' 'roun' th' corn'r fr'm th' House of Blazes; on Hicks street."

The doctor silently signified, by several silent nods of the head, that he had no further captious interruptions to interpose, and the lad went on,

"This ole limb—oh, she's a winder!" Jip chuckled out this parenthetical exclamation with very significant emphasis. "She tak's a young gal 'long with 'er. She puts bellerdoner in 'er eyes."

The doctor made a motion as though he did not quite comprehend.

"*Naw;* not th' *gal's* eyes: in 'er own eyes. Then th' young pullet leads 'er. I tell yer," continued Jip with animation, as though emphasizing the superior cunning of this old professional's tactics, "I tell yer, when she looks at yer, you'd think she wuz lookin' at sumph'n way—through—yer; way yoff, an' beyond. That's th' 'blind dodge', y' know. Well, she kin swing 'round a nour or so, an' cum in with a big riffle. When she's home though, she works th' growler heavy; an' 'er clinkers don't last 'er long. But when 'er money's drunk up, *out* she goes again, th' next day, an' gets plenty more."

"Do you know her name?"

"They calls 'er 'Ole Captain Burke'."

"Isn't this a fine state of affairs!" scornfully ejaculated the doctor.

"I do' 'no' sir:" answered Jip uncertainly; at the same time regarding the physician apprehensively.

"Well I think that it is:" energetically protested the citizen. Laws have been enacted purposly to meet and suppress these *practices*. For what purpose do we *support the Judiciary and* the Executive, if not to en-
ur laws? Why are these deceptive and fraud-

ulent vocations allowed free exercise under the very eyes of the police?"

This being also a poser to Jip, even more knotty than the one preceding, (as indeed it has been to others much above him in station,) he ventured again the same response,

"I do' 'no' sir."

"Well, I don't know either," hotly joined the doctor, "if it is not to suppress such petty swindling. I *do* happen to know that the police are aware of and understand the true character of all this. The attention of the force has been particularly directed to some of the most notorious of these cases."

Jip grinned. He suggested, in his staccato style that, "Th' 'perlice' wuz too 'tired 'fur such small fry."

"Yes," ironically concurred Dr. Jourdan; "they prefer to wait upon the full blown crime. Meantime these cunning tricksters thrive in immunity on emotional levies entrapped and swindled from an unspecting populace.

"A silly woman snatches a trinket from the counter of a store, and half a dozen policemen from some adjacent reserve, turn out after her. But ten times the value of the trinket is taken in front of the same store, just as wrongfully and in manner just as contrary to law, by one of these rigged-out shuffle-sharpers, and the same blue-coated conservators look on without interference. This is a remarkable instance of a 'distinction *without* a difference'." He turned again more directly to the lad;

"*Is* this deceptive practice customary among people *who live in places* like 'The Buckingham' and 'The *House of Blazes*'? Is this kind of begging a common *pation with them?*"

Jip quirked up one eye knowingly; "Why, yes Mister. Didn't yer know they has th'r reg'lar lays?"

"You mean, I suppose, that they 'lay' in wait for their prey;" suggested Dr. Jourdan ironically.

This was beyond Jip. "You mean," continued the doctor, dropping his paragram, "that they have their regular places, where they go to sit or stand, and receive whatever unsophisticated people are cheated into giving them."

Jip's ready assent to this simpler form, halted only at "unsophisticated." With this modification, which he would have eliminated as too tedious a modifier, he concurred.

"They calls 'em '*Monumental*' beggars;" he next enlightened.

"'They'?" echoed Dr. Jourdan, inquiringly.

"Th' perlice, y' know."

Jip's "Y' know," was an accommodating sort of "filler-in." It served to ward off embarrassment. It helped to round a period when no other phrase offered. It was also a modest overture of respectful deference, as implying, "Of course all this is well understood by one so learned as you are. I only allude to it in a passing way."

"The police call them 'Monumental' beggars;" mused Dr. Jourdan. "Very appropriately characterized, I'm sure." Then again to Jip;

"A singular name, that, Jip. Do you ever wonder why perhaps they have been given it?"

Jip shook his head.

"You've been in Greenwood Cemetery?" asked the doctor.

Jip had been *there*.

"You've seen the monuments which are standing there?"

Jip had seen the monuments. He had also noted them—"standing there." But he was not yet up to the level of the intended parallel.

"Well," ironically suggested the doctor, "perhaps these decoy tricksters who take a stand on the street, are monuments to the thoughtless indiscretion of those people who rain coppers and nickels into their hats and hands!"

Neither was this within the scope of Jip's comprehension, and the doctor did not pursue the matter. He had some very decided opinions and convictions, however, which we may find him expressing, later on, to more intelligent understandings.

With an air of "getting back after a digression," he recurred; "But let us return to my scheme. You say that you know *some* of the 'High-flyers,' as you call them. Now *I know them all.*"

This stunning announcement took Jip so unawares that he remained with open mouth, incredulously staring at the doctor.

"At least I've got a *list* of the most notorious ones;" more correctly stated the doctor, in answer to Jip's astonished look: "I mean their names, and where they live."

Jip's mouth slowly resumed its normal parallel.

"You're a buzzer;" he commented wonderingly. "Wher'd y' get 'em?"

"The 'list,' I suppose you mean. I procured it from The Society of Organized Charity."

Jip waited patiently. He had heard of such a *society, but* he knew nothing about the work accomplished by it. The doctor went on;

"Now do you wish to know for what special purpose I obtained it?"

Jip so signified.

"I got it for you——"

Jip more mystified than before;

"To use," continued the doctor, "in looking up Mrs. Clifford's lost baby."

An excited light came into Jip's eyes.

"As I said at the first, there *is* a possibility, that some of these professional begging-letter-writers, (you called them 'High-flyers,') may have Crissie at this moment in possession. Now if you are keen; and wide awake; and close; and careful——"

The doctor told over these modifyers very slowly, as repressers; for Jip was now so *very* "wide awake" that the physician feared, if this precipitant characteristic dominated, that his eagerness would defeat his cunning.

Jip settled back.

"V-e-r-y careful," repeated Dr. Jourdan in resumption, "then you can perhaps be of the greatest service to this distracted woman, whose child *you* probably were the primary cause of her losing."

Jip in no way disputed or resented this severe suggestion. The tears came to his eyes. He sat silent.

"I'll do my level best:" he finally answered in a subdued but forceful way. "You kin trus' me."

"Yes, I think that we can;" assented the doctor heartily. "Now listen to me:"

He paused a moment and left his chair. Going to a desk he took therefrom two folded papers. Resuming his seat he continued,

"Here are *two duplicate* lists, (both just alike)

mean), of these people and where they live. I hand you one;" and Dr. Jourdan extended it.

Jip took it solemnly.

"Can you read?" next asked the doctor.

"Oh yes sir."

"Very good then. Now open——"

"And write too?" he further asked, interrupting himself.

Jip could write also.

"Ver-y good, again." Then resuming,

"Now open your paper and read the names that you will find there."

Jip carefully spread the large double sheet over his knees. Upon it, four columns of names and addresses appeared in full round script. He commenced reading them over. The doctor followed upon his own sheet. Occasionally Jip raised his head with some such exclamation as this,

"Why, I know *them!*" Or, as some address met his eye:

"Hard lot in that hole!" Finally, all had been carefully gone over.

"Now fold it up and keep it securely. You are accustomed to go through these localities, crying for rags?"

"Oh yes sir! I know 'em well!"

"Then nobody will suspect that you are on a special search for anything. I want you to take every one of the places named, carefully and deliberately. Don't be hurried or flurried. When you approach one of the numbers designated, don't go at once to the people *themselves.* Circle about and get, first, what you can *from the neighboring* inmates. Try perhaps the adjoining houses. Let it be understood that you are after

rags. Whatever you venture to ask about a child, ask it in such way as to avoid suspicion of your real object. You can inquire in a casual manner whether there are many children in the house: small children: a baby. If a baby is mentioned, then ascertain whether it has been seen lately. Skirmish about in this way as much as it is safe to do before you visit the parties themselves. When finally you get to this critical centre, and enter the very rooms reported on your paper, then use every wit about you. Watch, (but without letting them suspect that you are so doing,) for anything like an infant's garment: or anything that a baby uses. Do so with all the more care if you have been told that there *is* a baby there, but the people themselves *pretend* to you that *there is not*. If you strike a clue, don't let anyone know or suspect it. Don't get elated or betray that you have discovered anything. Whatever occurs, keep a 'level' head on your shoulders, and *never be in a hurry*.

"If you *should* have the good forune to run across Mrs. Clifford's child, and can in some way, not exciting remark or special notice, identify it from the 'star' mark, or a scar, don't go any further *then*. If this should happen on the street, retire a little way, but shadow the persons until you make sure where they live. That decided, lose no time then in getting to me. Do you 'take in' my scheme?"

Jip had remained sitting; very still, and very attentive. Every faculty had been intent upon the doctor's directions. He stirred himself after a moment and replied,

Yes sir; *'ceptin'* some 'f y'r big words. But I git *n drift."*

course," continued Dr. Jourdan, "you must

rely mainly on your own judgment in working this matter through. No directions of mine will cover every situation. The case might arise where you would boldly seize the child and run with it; making perhaps for the nearest police-station. If you should judge it best not to do this, by no means fail to keep the baby in sight. Watch, if possible, without letting the people know or notice your object, until you can signal a policeman, and get him to take her. The force all know about the abduction.

"Now," concluded Dr. Jourdan rising, "we two will see what can be done. The best detectives are all astray on this. They shake their heads sagely, but nothing decisive comes of their sagacity. *We* will try a hand. Be here at eight o'clock, every night that you arrange to do so, and we will confer together. Take the day for the more open part of your work: and the night for the covered moves. Good-bye!" and the projector of these rival detective methods held out his hand to his adjutant.

Jip accepted the "community-of-two" pledge: shook hands with energetic effusion and heartily bid the doctor a responsive "good-night."

CHAPTER XVII.

A CLEW.

THE bells jangled!

"Rags? Rags?" cried Jip clamorously in a sharp *street staccato*. He sat perched on the wagon's front-

NOTE:—Portions of Jip's dialect are certainly extraordinary. Lest I receive undue credit, I feel constrained to disclaim originality as an inventor of his phrases. I am not a neologist. Jip's vernacularisms, as represented in narrative, are all current. They are in use by the class he typifies. The same of other characters in this story.—AUTHOR.

board, watching with business keenness for a head responsive, in some doorway; for the wave of some hand from a window. The horse shuffled with a tardy loiter along the uneven cobble-stone surface of Furman street. "Old Blimber" had long been in the business and knew how to take his time. "Rags? Rags?"

"Shut up!" yelled a pavement urchin affrontingly.

Jip was not annoyed. He was a young man who never allowed temper to interfere with business; and furthermore, with no time for quarrels. "Hez y'r ma got any rags?" he took occasion to inquire mildly of the young curb-skipper, in return.

The manner propitiated, and the boy willingly replied,

"Yes: a hull bag full!"

Jip eagerly followed up this prospect. He remembered that this house was particularly indicated on the paper given him by Dr. Jourdan. "Where be they?" he asked.

"Three flights, Mister; Room Twenty-six." And the little fellow pointed toward "The Island."

The staid old horse, hearing this prelude to traffic, came to a stand. His acquired intelligence in this rag-dickering occupation, joined to his natural disinclination for motion, made it wholly unnecessary for his young master to indicate a halt in any way further than by commencing a conversation, or by leaping from the wagon.

Jip grasped his bag and scales. He entered Island Number Ten, and commenced the ascent of the pit-hole staircase. Aged Blimber improved the advantage of-

nd proceeded to investigate the contents of an
el standing on the curb near him.
gh whistling, apparently with nonchalant air

of easy unconcern, yet was the lad's every faculty covertly on the alert. For several days past, under the pursuing system of discovery suggested and supervised by Dr. Jourdan, Jip had patiently kept up his search for some clue to little Crissie: but as yet without any rewarding result.

One or two promises had offered; but as yet, no substantial results had confirmed them. Nevertheless he was not discouraged. He quietly persevered. "The Barracks"; "Beggar's Paradise"; "Smoky Hollow"; "Crazy Clump"; "The Devil's Quarter Deck"; "The House of Blazes," and other like breeding-places of immorality and crime: they had all been duly visited; worked through. And now "Island Number Ten" was the next notorious place on his list.

Pray, tender mother, loving daughter, affectionate sister; pray that he miss not the clue here!

The old horse has poked his nose into that ash barrel, and is searching eagerly for bits of garbage; the ragged children scuttle about and wrangle over their pitch-pennies and marbles upon the walk; the occupants of the saloon guzzle beer and corrupt the air with their blasphemy and foul breaths; the whole house steams and exhales rank iniquity: but hidden under all this compost of depravity, there are souls worth saving: aspirations to hope over: something to pray for!

You and I know of a precious gem, lodged in detention here. Lost! A mother's prayers, her midnight importunings, they fill the long night periods with agonized askings for its restoration. Are these beseechings about to receive answer!

Jane Stanhope's fate, too, is involved; the drift of troublous uncertainties. Connie's as well. Send him *Providence*, that even such trivial incident as the lo

ing of a junk wagon before that sodden house, may prove the first link in a golden chain of propitious circumstance, that shall yet strengthen and lengthen to happy deliverance!

"Three flights;" cogitates Jip, climbing patiently up, and looking about him cautiously. "But *isn't* this an old rackety ram-shackle! A regular rip-out gammy slug-mill! I'll bet, many er bloke has been cracked in this 'ere crib!" But he did not forget his object.

When no one was nigh he crept stealthily: sometimes noiselessly gliding down a hall to listen at a door here; or to spy into the key hole of another there. Meantime, if any one appeared, he was discovered sauntering carelessly along, softly whistling, or pushing a street merchant's inquiries after rags.

Thus has he flitted; first through the lower, and next the second hall: and now, after having mounted another flight, he is progressing, in the same way, down along the third floor tenement passage.

"Lem me see;" he deliberates, scanning the doors: "I want Twenty-six. Here we be, mos' to it."

The numbers in this hall commenced at Twenty-one, the first room at the landing, and they ran towards the further end: the even numbers being on the left and the odd on the right hand side. Thirty was the last, and a corner room.

A man threw open the door of Thirty and came out. He approached Jip, on his way down the hall. With a scowl on his face he was hurrying forward in a preoccupied way, muttering in an undertone to himself. As he lurched along past, Jip caught the words, "Cursed brat!"

"*He don't sling a very* chippery lip th's mornin';" *thought Jip, turning* about to look after him. "A

fam'ly brile, p'rhaps. I wonder what 'th' brat's' been up to!"

The man turned and caught Jip regarding him. "Well!" he snapped viciously, "What you doin' *here?*"

"Rags!" explained Jip in his professional voice.

This accounting was evidently satisfactory, for the man turned about and resumed his way down the stairs.

Jip again took up his methods. Proceeding on and taking Twenty-six first: all quiet there. Then Twenty-seven, opposite: no one at home here. Now he crouches at the key hole of *Twenty-eight.* He listens stealthily. He notes a soft step pacing backwards and forwards through this room. As the footfalls pass and repass the door, he can hear a gentle motherly—"Sh-h; sh-h." The aspirate is softly uttered, and in cadenced time with each alternate tread.

"Mus' be a baby *there;*" decides Jip. "Ole man riled up, and a little raspy on it, perhaps." This comment, because he remembered the undertone curse. "But didn't the old swiveller come out o' that *corner* room, though?"

"I'll take 'Twenty-six' an' git th' rags first. That's next door th' baby. P'rhaps som' thing'll tumble to me in there."

Thus reasoning, he approached and knocked at the entrance.

"Mornin' mum!"

A coarse low-browed woman stood in the door before him. She marked him suspiciously.

"*Well, young bummer!*" with an impatient jerk of speech: "*What* yer want?"

Jip held up his bag and scales, directed a conciliating look into her pimpled face, and asked while he also explained,

"Rags? A young feller on th' street said yer had some t' sell."

"H' much?" meaning to ask how much he gave per pound. She was not a woman of redundant speech.

"Be they white?"

"'White'!" sneered the vixen contemptuously. "What yer givin' us, young feller? Think we rolls 'n lux'ry? No: they're mixed."

"Cent?" suggested Jip warily.

The woman slammed the door in his face. Not at all disturbed, Jip opened it cautiously three inches and raised his bid:

"Well, I'll say—cent 'nd a half."

The woman pulled open the door. "I couldn't," protested Jip, "raise a mill on that. I has to sort 'em all over, and——"

"You lie;" coolly interrupted Number Thirty.

After more parley however, two cents was the price finally agreed upon; and then Jip entered, sat down and adjusted his scales. In taking his seat he edged as closely as possible to the partition next to Number Twenty-eight. While attending to business he ventured,

"Any to sell in Twenty-eight?"

"How th' devil sh'd I know? Can't y' go an' ask?"

"Tho't y' might 'a' known 'em in there;" returned Jip; as though to explain and justify the question. "People as has *babies*, 'nd lots 'f fussin's to make up fer 'em, usually has some rags left."

"*They an't any babies* in Twenty-eight;" asserted *the woman. Then she* went further, as though

with an intention of being exact if she said anything about it;

"Tho't I heerd one once though, a-squallin' in Thirty. That's the further room, th't looks out on th' corners. But I dunno. T'wan't only fer a second, 'nd I never heerd it ag'in. Y' bett'r leave *Thirty* alone though."

She was getting social. Jip had just paid her fifty cents for twenty-five pounds of rags. The effect was good. He was surprised, though, to hear the affirmation that there was no baby in *Twenty-eight*. He was sure that, while listening outside, he had heard some one walk there with a child in arms, as though putting it to sleep. But he betrayed nothing. Here was a point, however, to which he must give further attention. With preparative duplicity, he declared himself warm and thirsty, and inquired,

"Kin you send down th' growler?"

"Fer you?"

"Fer us both;" he replied, squinting one eye at her, and reaching out seven cents.

The woman eagerly took the money, got a tin pail, and immediately disappeared. Jip was left alone for a brief few moments.

He sprang up quickly. Creeping very close to the wall, he placed his ear against it. Yes; he could plainly hear the same slow regular saunter—back and forth. But this time without the hushing accompaniment.

"Don't hear no 'sh-h' business this trip;" he reflected. "But I'm sure ther's a baby in ther'. An' this towzer," (referring to his late customer) "'peers *not* t' know 't. Looks 's though they wuz keepin' it *mighty clus* fer some reas'n 'r other. P'raps, after all, *I've struck* a lead as'll pan out!"

The "towzer" returned at this point of his theorizing. She put the pail, containing a quart of beer, upon the table. Procuring a couple of drinking glasses, without any further preliminaries she invited Jip to "sit by".

Now, although anxious to propose further inquiries about a baby in the next room, Jip hesitated. Possibly this woman knew there *was* a child there, notwithstanding she had said that there was not. If so, and she mistrusted his suspicions, she might, if friendly with Number Twenty-eight, give a warning.

Another complexity on the other hand: If she really *was* ignorant of such a presence there, then his suggestive questionings might prick her to a prying curiosity, which, in its bungling attempts at satisfaction, might in turn give Twenty-eight warning.

But he tingled with *this* conclusion:—In either event, there was positive indication of an attempt to cover the knowledge of a child's lodgment there.

"Move slow;" he admonished to himself, remembering the doctor's injunction, "'n' don't flush th' business too soon."

Cogitating next, (while drinking his share of the beer,) upon the muttered imprecation of the impatient man who had come from Number Thirty, he ventured to lead a little in that direction:—"Is Twenty-eight and Thirty, one family?"

"Naw!" The tone of answer implied distrust, with a color of enmity. Then she continued, "Ther's a cub lives alone in Thirty. You'd bett'r keep clear o' him. He's a reg'lar gib-face."

"Well, w'd *y'u* go in Twenty-eight, 'f you wuz me?" *ventured Jip, feeling* his way a little further. At *the same time he* was puzzling to account for those

words, "Curse the brat," which had been exclaimed by the occupant coming out of room Thirty.

"Yes; 'f y' wan' to. They's a woman 'nd a boy ther'. A widder I guess. She may hev a hack."

"You know 'em?" asked Jip as he carelessly took another sip of the beer.

"An't my style;" she replied. "Keep mighty clus. Gess they're on the '*sick lay*' with som' o' the'r snob r'lations. Leastways them kind com's t' see 'em of'n 'nough. No: *I* nev'r bothers 'em."

Jip forbore any further questioning of this woman. Too anxious a seeking might overreach itself. Taking a hasty look from the window, to assure that old Blimber was all right, he shouldered his bag, took up his scales and went out with the careless observation, "Guess I might as well try 'em."

He closed the door behind him and stepped softly to Twenty-eight. Stooping quickly he again listened; this time placing his ear at the key hole. A smile and a nod of the head confirmatory followed. This time he audibly distinguished a tenderly uttered lullaby. Very soft it was, but manifestly addressed to a baby. He grew hot with eager speculative conjecturings. Dropping noiselessly on to one knee he essayed next to spy through the key hole.

Yes: as the glow on his face now testified. He was rewarded! He was able to discern this slowly pacing woman, and her eyes were lovingly cast down upon an infant, carried in her arms.

Sensible now of his flush and tremor, he retreated softly a short distance down the hall. Then turning back, after recovering himself, he approached with a *loud shuffling* tread, and knocked smartly on the door. *At once he* heard a confusion: a progress inside as

of hasty pre-arrangement. He cautiously tried the door. It was locked.

This flutter of preparation soon ceased and the door was opened.

Jip saw a woman with pale face; glossy hair; large black eyes within dark circles of shade. She looked careworn: more like an invalid who had left her bed too soon. Her dress was neat, and close-fitted. Jane Stanhope stood before him. She quietly asked,

"What is it?"

Jip was anxious to get inside that room. He *must* have opportunity for better observation. But the woman stood with the door-knob in her hand, and her air plainly said, "State your business. You need not come in."

Of course Jip must make response, and at once he asked if she had any rags to sell.

No: she had none. Still she stood there quietly; and gradually her expression grew into—"Well! why don't you go away?"

"Mus' get in there som'how;" meditated Jip. He half turned as though to depart. But facing back again quickly, as with an afterthought and a question, both which he urged in the expression of his face, he inquired, as though it was a matter of the utmost importance to him—just then,

"Won't you please t' giv' me th' time o' day?"

She must turn her back to look at the clock. Upon the instant when she did so, Jip quickly but secretly gave his nose a violent wrench.

"It's half past t——" Then abruptly checking herself and fixing her observation nervously on his face, *she exclaimed,*

"But what's that?" at the same time indicating with her finger toward his face.

Jip slowly and inquiringly drew his hand across his nose in compliant investigation. Then lowering and looking at it, was visibly astonished. A broad streak of blood had been transferred to his palm.

"Hev hed a'nawful head ache th's mornin'," he explained; "'n I guess it's a rush o' blood——like."

A look of sympathy came into the woman's face.

"Kinder awkward; isn't it?" he insinuated, catching the drops in the hollow of one hand; same time blinking upward his eyes through the open door and suggestively in the direction of the sink.

Jane did not hesitate any longer. She stepped toward the faucet, motioning him to follow her into the room, and started the water running into a basin for his convenience.

"You can wash there;" she said. Jip accepted at once; first depositing his bag and scales on the floor. While engaged at the sink, his covert inquisitions were very active.

Now there *were* people in that house who had seen Connie pass along the halls and up the stairways carrying a baby; but this had occasioned no comment. Contradictory as the statement may seem, it was unfavorable to Burle's schemes, just at this point, that Number Twenty-six had not also seen the child. It was a point against him at this juncture of moves upon the board of fate, that the "Towzer" knew nothing of the presence of this baby in Twenty-eight. She was too indifferent to care whose child it may have been; *too dense to* investigate with any success as to how it *was procured* to be there. But, not knowing of its

presence, she had, of course, represented to Jip that no child was there.

Further, as concerned this next door neighbor, Burle had judged it best to make a special effort to keep a knowledge of Crissie's presence from her. Connie, therefore, according to his mother's instructions, had always watched preparatively, before skipping out with the baby.

Whenever the little one had been uneasy, Mrs. Stanhope, with also the same precautionary motive, had passed through the secret way of communication into Burle's corner room. Once there, and quite removed from hearing, the "Towzer" was not likely to note any baby complainings.

Accordingly, now, is obtruded into these commonplace conditions, a suspicious contrariety. Twenty-six, a next door neighbor, has declared that there is no baby in Twenty-eight. Jip has certainly, through the key-hole of Twenty-eight, seen little Crissie. This is a mistrustful discrepancy between fact current, and fact evident.

Notwithstanding all this, if Jane had appeared with easy unconcern, the child slumbering in her arms, such a situation, so naturally in the course of affairs ordinary, would have misled Jip. Very likely he would have reconciled the matter with a neighbor's indifferent ignorance, and have missed, thereby, any positive confirmation of suspicious irregularity.

But there *was not now any child in this room!* Neither could Jip discover any signs whatever of the past or present occupancy of one!

The very measure taken by the woman to allay distrust and *mislead suspicion*, proved therefore to be the

very one which confirmed and incited Jip to further investigation.

The simulation of honest conditions by dishonest habitude, is artificial and laboriously desperate at best. It is continuously tangled with obstinate and thorny straits; and though disaster comes not early, detection is only deferred. The judgment, which the never ending burden of struggle may avoid in the present, is certain of pronunciation in the near future.

Impressed with this contradictory aspect, Jip, while tardily washing the blood from his nose, contrived to examine warily everything about the room. Jane, meanwhile, stood observant behind him.

"No baby! Not a sign of one!" Thus he meditated with cunning craft. "Something certainly *is* 'crooked' here!"

He was considerably nonplussed withal. What could she have done with it! Not a door to be seen, excepting the hall door. That one Jane held suggestively open. And she did not present an appearance of unconcern. "Go, as soon as possible;" was the uneasy language of her face. And this disquiet still further incited him.

Jip assembled all his wits. He conjured them; puzzling anxiously over the situation. He wanted the sudden disappearance of that baby *explained*. If it was an unusual prestigitation, then, of course, embarrassment would follow any questioning about it. He concluded, therefore, to ask no questions. He determined not to "give the thing away," as he expressed to himself, by any bungling. He would avoid putting this party on *her guard*. But he made as careful note as he dared, of *everthing* about the room. Finally, the blood having *ceased, he* thanked the waiting occupant, and stooped

to recover his bag and scales. Upon this Jane turned, apparently relieved, to see him out.

How true it is that "Little things are no trifles!" A spot, a finger mark, a stain, a trinket: either one of these may bring a murderer to the gallows. Insignificant nothings are often the diminutive agents, which, like the little key one carries in a vest pocket, may turn back some hidden bolt, and unlock secrets deemed theretofore unapproachable by the guilty conspiritors.

When Jip's face was directed to the floor, as he bent to take up his merchandise, there lay, close under his eyes, a very simple thing:—a child's safety pin!

It was the easy act of an instant to pick it up unobserved. Then, righting with his burden to an erect posture, he quietly retired from the room to ponder and to plan more at leisure.

Before leaving "The Island" however, he cautiously gathered from other occupants, that a woman by the name of Stanhope occupied the room Twenty-eight. No one knew anything definite as to her occupation, or concerning a baby in her room. But from one ragged little girl, whom he interested in the wheels of his silver watch, seated with her a few moments on the stairs, Jip gleaned yet further, that "Connie Stanhope" was Mrs. Stanhope's little boy; and that she had sometimes met Connie coming down the hall with—"a wee little baby."

He was able also to ascertain that the brutal looking man who came out of Number Thirty, the room next beyond Mrs. Stanhope's, lived there, ostensibly, alone. *That in the saloon* below, men called him *"Colonel Burle."* That he was hard and cruel, and the

children kept out of his way. Very little, though, was known about him. He came and went, mostly at night.

The rag vender was thus minded to pick up what he could relating to Burle, because of the words carelessly uttered and overheard; and because, furthermore, of this man's close proximity to room Twenty-eight.

Issuing at last from the house, Jip sprang upon his wagon; and the jangling bells, and the sharp staccato solicitations—

"RAGS!! RAGS! . . . . . *rags*,"

echoed further and further away; until finally they were merged in the confused and distant hum of a far-off diffusion.

That evening, Dr. Jourdan and Jip held a very long and a very earnest conference.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JIP IS COUNTERCHECKED.

IT was yesterday that Jip discovered the first clue. That it did or did not refer to little Crissie, was not yet known. That same evening he had made report to Dr. Jourdan. The doctor was impressed, and—we do not need to say it—interested. He regarded the signal as promising. It must be followed up; but cautiously; and he instructed Jip in the accomplishment of this.

A disguise was procured for him, in which the lad could hang about "The Island" as an old peddler woman. *She must carry* a tray of pencils, shoe strings, *pens, paper and envelopes.*

Accordingly to-day, Saturday, Jip has duly returned;

and he is now interesting himself in the needs of "Island Number Ten" in this line of notions; especially along the fourth floor of the premises.

Patient old Blimber is enjoying a rest this Saturday. The day brings also grateful respite to sensitive ears, from the jangle of those bells: the horrid jangle, yes, the hideous jangle of those bells!—*bells!!*—BELLS!!!

While Jip, during the forenoon, was thus engaged in this new rôle, further developments rewarded him. The same impatient man issued from Number Thirty. This time, however, with a companion; a large, heavy framed, lose jointed, slouchingly dressed figure. Flat face: a boundary of whiskers under and back of his chin: flabby cheeks. We shall get a better description of him at twelve o'clock to-night.

The peddler woman's business appeared to be in their direction, for she immediately shuffled along after them.

Passing down the stairs, the pair went into the saloon through the rear door; the one called "The Family Entrance."

The old huckle-back, after a reasonable interval, appeared at the *front* door on State street. Pushing boldly in, she offered her wares; slowly picking her way along down "The Tunnel," and approaching the "perspective" end.

There sat the two men, just from Thirty. They occupied the last table. It had a place in the corner, but a step or two from the rear door through which they had just entered, and was jammed tightly against the *wooden partition* that separated this "hell-hole" *stall from the* "well-hole" hall.

Now, this disposition left only two sides of the table

THERE SAT THE TWO MEN, JUST FROM "THIRTY." (Page 2

available for use; and the flabby-faced "Rev." Jeremiah Jowl occupied the inner side, next to the wall, and the chalk-faced "Colonel" Burle sat at the end, close to the door. This door swung inwards. In other words it opened toward Burle's back as he sat at the table.

Therefore, notwithstanding that this table was the most conveniently retired from *inside* observation, nevertheless as an offset, its near proximity of the door, and the thinness of the adjacent wooden partition, involved compensatory *disadvantages* as concerned the *outside*.

Some one, beforehand in finding this out, had already adventured a method whereby a listening advantage could be taken of the situation. Therefore, when the old woman, having passed the two men deep in some discussion over their beer, finally emerged into the little hall beyond, she was elated by its discovery. And this was the method thereof. Upon the outside of this dividing partition was a small aperture. Evidently it had been cut through as a peep-hole of observation In deference, no doubt, to the general characteristic humor of the place, this hole had been whittled through —"tunnel" shaped.

Very small it was, however. The larger opening was upon the outside. The smaller graduated one, penetrated the inside of the panel at a point not more than twelve inches from Burle's mouth, as he sat discussing matters with his companion at the table.

Now the fraudulent "Colonel" took particular notice of this keen eyed old huckster as she lingered obtrusively about, and his suspicions were stirred He *watched* her, with masked malicious regard, until she *passed out* at the door behind him: whereupon he got

up, and with some choler, impatiently closed it with a kick.

It was whilst casting about for further expedient, after being thus excluded, that she discovered this auricular facility.

Warily placing her ear to it, not many moments elapsed before she was electrified by these fragments of a sentence, uttered in a low conversational undertone: "That little brat . . . . by us. . . . park . .

This certainly was an encouraging leader; and Jip exclaimed under his breath,

"I realy b'lieve I've 'dropped' at last!"

He chuckled, and trembled too; quite as nervously as does the novitiate hunter with the buck-fever, when he excitedly essays to fix his wavering aim upon a first venture.

But Jip was not a "chicken;" and he pulled himself together with a rather disgusted, "Humph! Wonder 'f I'm goin' t' slop over now!"

He did not—"slop over." Neither did he forget again to consult his oracle.

With faculties keen as the hawk's, and a guarding side-eye and ear for interruptions both door-wards and street-wards, he applied again at that fruitful aperture.

"Got it to decoy the swells, ..."

Then followed, as Jip judged by the rising inflection, some inquiry in a deeper lower and more guarded tone of voice; evidently from the flabby copartner in beer and base doing, whose seat was in the corner, next the wall. Whatever this man interrogated, Jip could make nothing of it: but the answer, being nearer *his ear, he partly* caught that:

". . . . . *do not* . . . . . yet, *whose* it is."

Then another question; and anothe
mentary clause of which his keen sens
" . . . . . objects to my workin' it
her ! "

At this moment there came a so
ing footsteps from the inside, and the
quickly away.

When, a few seconds after, a di
stumbled past on his way out, this pe
discovered standing down off the st
curb. One would have remarked th
decrepit, and that her distinguishing
—dejected indolence of mind. Perh
spondent over the non disposal of her

But after this " passenger-gulp "
around the corner, some influence
wonderfully. The chance outside
have been astonished at this sudd
With a wonderful spryness she tu
denly and hobbled nimbly back withi

Upon her return, all inside the ha
now another venture at that comm
And this time :

" . . . . . will not . . . . . foc
. . . . . want to use . . . . . .

Ah Jip, Jip! Don't tempt furth
surely have enough ! Fly with it
These people are suspicious and agil
you in this business you'll indeed "
Get off safely while you can.

But the attraction was too great.
for stealthy auricular participation i
conversation.

At this point, more beer; furth

distant and more cautious baritone grumble; and then the tunnel passage next yielded;

"..... girl-baby ..... don't think ..... twigged yet."

Upon this there certainly were evidences of palsy—or something else. The old woman shook violently, and some of her wares scattered out with a dangerous rattle upon the floor. But she gathered them up hastily, and daringly ventured *once* more; and for—the—last—time:

"Yes: in Twenty-e'— ....." was the fragment imparted. Simultaneously there came the noise of shuffling feet: a pushing back of chairs. And simultaneously the aged eavesdropper had very pressing business elsewhere.

This time the outside observer, on seeing her reappear, would have concluded that, whatever the object, the *necessity* was of the last importance. She made off with a remarkable show of vigor for— "so old" a person.

But she had delayed—*too long*, and unfortunately the door opened soon enough to permit an *inside* observation of this remarkable show of sexagenarian prepollence. Its impolitic display certainly roused curious, if not dangerous inquisition.

Burle, in advance, was stepping into the hall, just as the last corner of a Yankee-notion-tray was whisking through the outside door. Always distrustful and on the alert, he sprang quickly to the threshold and looked cautiously after.

"D——n my gall! That hell-slopped old woman!" He was thus passionately exclaiming to Jowl, who had asked *with considerable inquietude*, "Why! Why!! *What is it?*"

"Come here!" continued Burle, impatiently. Jowl had been lingering behind with forethoughtful caution. He now advanced quickly to Burle's side.

"Just look at——"

But on the instant the old peddler turned around the corner into State street, and, of course, disappeared. Burle's speech broke off abruptly as she vanished. With an impetuous oath and an excited beckoning for Jowl to follow, he sprang down the steps and along Furman street to the corner.

There he paused; shielded himself, and again peered guardedly after the spectacle of an electrified old petticoat, now fairly flying up State street.

"There she goes!" This nervously to Jowl who had now joined him. "See! There! On the opposite side."

She *was* going; sure enough! And at a rate that lent abundant confirmation to his misgivings. Indeed, they had quickened when he first caught glimpse of that dissolving tray, vanishing so mysteriously through the door.

"*Did* you ever see time like that in a d——d old measly seventy-sixer? Why, her old legs are galvanized! I tell you, man, something's wrong;" he summed up in conclusion, drawing back his head. "She ha'n't hung 'round us in the saloon for nothing! Once I caught her eye. By the four gospels, it was a sharp one; now that I recollect it! Jowl, this means mischief. She must be followed."

All this Burle was saying rapidly to his companion, as the two continued apprehensively to scrutinize *this septuagenarian* notions-vender, as she hurried *with vigorous but embarrassed* strides up State street. *Just as Burle made* his final declaration of pursuit,

Jip turned to the left and disappeared into Columbia Place; and then, the exigencies of the case forbidding another instant's delay, the counterfeit "Colonel" sprang quickly from the cover of the corner and rapidly followed the counterfeited Jip.

He cast back his face to Jowl at the moment of his departure and appointed, in guarded undertone,

"To-night—twelve—New York."

This utterance was brief, but it was intelligible to Jowl. Burle would meet him in New York at midnight, at a certain room in the "Corlear's Hook" quarter, and there report the result of this shadowing. The rendezvous indicated was well known to both. It was Jowl's retreat. Many wicked conferences they had already held there.

The old sinner, Jowl! He stood there peering anxiously up State street, until Burle in pursuit, disappeared in turn around the same corner that Jip had last taken. Afterwards he conferred with himself:

"By thunder! Does seem 's though she'd started to get somewhere—mighty sudden! Then, her turnin' that second corner 's soon as she could reach it! Guess she wanted to be out of sight about 's quick as possible."

Then he went slowly back to the hall. He stood inside the square pit and looked about him. He peered here and there with a wandering idea of discovering something.

He did discover something! and his flabby cheek changed to a more sickly sallow, for his eye had lighted on that peep-hole!

He reconnoitered *it guardedly.* He approached close *to it. He stooped down.* He looked through it.

t see much!"

Then he applied his ear.

"Can't *hear* much!"

"But she *might* 'a' caught something. We was at this corner, inside." Then he unburdened himself:

"Durn her cartilaginous old clod-skippers! I wish they'd stumble her over something and break her wizened old neck! I do believe she's been listenin'!" Then, after further silent meditation:

"Hope Burle 'll keep her in sight. He *must* "hole" her somewhere!"

"What was't we said?" And the flabby old plotter tried to recall their conversation, in order the better to consider what probability of dangerous "catch-on" intelligence might attach; to a word here, or a sentence there; overheard by this spying listener.

Implicating witnesses such fragments have often proved, when, returning unexpectedly in trial emergency, they have confronted the unwary utterer!

Albeit, breathed with motioning lips only, into the air; or but the whisperings of thought, they may elude mortal audience: but such words never fail to vibrate through the eternal distances into the ear of Immortal God. How we fail to realize this, or to anticipate the confusion that awaits, when those thoughts shall confront at the final revelation of all things!

It was not a difficult matter to follow so conspicuous an object as Jip presented in his clumsy mock attire. The boy dared not risk his identity in a street car, and therefore he hurried along, as well as he could, on foot.

Burle has the suspicious old woman in sight. He *pursues; through* Columbia Place to Joralemon street;

then straight up and past the city buildings into Willoughby street.

The further he shadows, the more confirmed in mind is he that this expeditious hobbler is not what she purports to be.

He notes especially that, at one time, though "the thing" dropped one or two notions from its tray, *and saw them go*, for the head turned and looked, yet "it" paused not for recovery.

Burle pocketed them when he reached the spot. "Two pencils and a rubber eraser!" Thus he inventoried in an exclamatory tone to himself as he picked them up. Then he speculated further: "An old woman, obliged to peddle such bits for a living in a place like Island Number Ten, an't the one to throw her wares away, careless-like. There's false pretense here; and for some purpose:" he charged angrily. And in cursing such duplicity, this impudent travesty on all honest pretense, roundly damned himself by proxy: though perhaps he didn't so consider it.

He began to puff from his exertions; and again he renewed his dubitations. "Them legs don't belong to any old seventy-six step-'nd-fetchit! Curse it! How the old wobble-top spins!"

Jip had now reached the Washington Park Plaza, and was skimming across its smooth surface. "If she don't light soon," he panted, "I'll have to call off. Her wind's everlasting!"

But he kept "her" within sight until Jip reached his junk shop. There the lad stopped suddenly and looked warily around. The place was on the north side of Myrtle Avenue, opposite the Plaza.

Burle had already noted a slackening in the pace that so tried him, and he rightly conjectured, "Dam'me

! the old rat a'nt a-slowin' down. She's comin' to her ennel." He was not unprepared therefore for Jip's ause and stealthy survey. He had checked pursuit, on is own part, in good season. Affecting an air of absent ıdifference, he took advantage of a well selected posi- ion, which threw the box of a maple tree between imself and this nondescript.

From this vantage post of observation he saw the bject of his investigation take a key from her dress; djust it; turn the lock; hastily enter and then close the oor.

The observant pursuer made no doubt that she ecured it after her. He imagined that he could hear he bolt shoot.

After a few minutes further consideration, Burle auntered with a careless air past this interesting junk hop. He read the sign:—

GIPWORTH FOXHARD.

nd he noted the number.

"Guess I've holed the paddling old petticoat at last. 'm pretty sure that she's alone too: else why'd she ave to unlock the door from the outside?"

He couldn't puzzle out very much though, with any efiniteness, and was conjecturing and considering, hen Jip suddenly reappeared.

This time he made no pause to look about him. He ·····ed the door and instantly took a flight that

The tired hawk might as well have undertaken to capture the swift pigeon!

This time Jip was clothed in his legitimate dress.

Burle, at first, had stared confusedly at him; but he had not a moment to consider, for the lad quickly darted away.

It was after two blocks, as a losing second in the race, completely blown and obliged to abandon further shadowing, that the "Colonel" found an inner voice to curse and to wonder.

He must, though, in any event, have given up the chase, however able or unable; for others had been attracted, and there was danger of a hue-and-cry. While it was a hobbling old woman, he could manage to keep her in sight without betraying to others the pursuit. But this flying lad! Here was a different state of affairs, both as concerned ability and discretion as well. An accounting might be required; possibly to some officer of the force who should be attracted, either by the clamor, or the spectacle of a man racing violently after a fleeing lad. And accordingly, exhausted of wind and admonished of wisdom, he was fain to desist.

He must content himself at present with the junk shop address, and with knowing that an old woman had transformed herself into a young man, and then disappeared in the direction of the wealthy quarter of Clinton Avenue. There was no doubt about *identity* in the transformation. He had been near enough, when Jip emerged from the shop, instantly to recognize the same features and eyes in the lad, as had belonged to the old woman.

Slowly he retraced his way.

But *indeed he had learned* enough! A lad, disguised *as an old peddler, hanging* about Island Number Ten

with a notion tray; and perhaps listening to c
sations not intended for publication!

Then this lad's hasty retreat; transformed *rea*
ance; and final *dis*appearance! The manne
method of it all very plainly indicated that a s
been reconnoitering for somebody: and *to* that "
body," very evidently, he was now hastening
port!

"By all the twelve apostles!" swore Burle,
thought the matter over in a car on his way
"You young gully-fluff! You can't play this
on me. I'll make things fake: I'll jow in time!

CHAPTER XIX.

JOWL'S DEN.

A midnight conference:
ther surprise: and a
tion of "The way I c
by the juggling masq
himself.

It was one o'clock; the first hour of a S
morning.

A smoky kerosene lamp burned on the tabl

forded, also, abundant luminosity for evil purposes immediately at hand.

A soiled bed stood in a distant corner of the room. Tumbled thereon, in a cramped posture evincing a careless disregard of the insensible creature's comfort, lay what once had been—an innocent babe; an ingenuous little girl; an attractive maiden. Alas, a sorrowful figure now! A drunken and an abandoned woman!

From the stertorous breathings that sounded from this outskirt of light, one would have diagnosed—either apoplexy, or a case of exceedingly vile whiskey.

In respect next to the allusion, "immediately at hand," this sickly light was all sufficient for the evil pursuit just then engaging two men; and which consisted in their alternate manipulation of a soiled pack of cards. This occupation they interrupted by intermittent resorts to a bottle of liquor. Said bottle meantime overlooking the progress of the game from a convenient point of vantage in the centre of the table.

A very characteristic umpire, this dram-filled cylindroid! Capable of any tergiversation accompanying double dealing; or as a factor to a base end! An eager vagabond in villainy; a willing accomplice in crime; and a grovelling coward when overtaken by discovery! Such the quality its temper since the world began; and how can we record anything different of it now?

The two cronies who held the cards were seated opposite. They had been playing poker, with a "limit" of fifty cents, "to make the game interesting."

Further, as to the surroundings:—Looking up, one's investigations encountered a smoke-sooted scuttle-window, which kept the lamp-light safely in, and the sunlight securely *out; and which* was well battened against *ventilation at all times.*

Looking down; an old carpet, rent and discolored from hard usage, met the eye. This dilapidated rag made a pretense of covering that half of the room toward the door. It was loaded with dust and tobacco ashes, and sprinkled with scraps of paper, charred match ends and burnt out cigar stubs.

If the eye wandered around the room, the further discoveries made, were a rickety old-fashioned washstand; also a bowl thereon, scolloped about the edge with jagged nicks. And this bowl held a pitcher; and this pitcher was minus the handle. Likewise a palsied bureau with the lower drawer gone. Probably taken at some prior time of exigent fuel necessity, preliminarily smashed, and then fed to the cracked stove, which lazily and impudently balanced itself on three legs and stared at you with its mouth wide open.

The men occupied the only two seats which this apartment afforded; one, a straight-backed common chair, the other an old-fashioned rocker. And now, to this hasty description, add mention of a smoky plastering which had given way in places; and lastly a door which showed recent repairs—especially in that it mounted a strong inner bolt—and no more is necessary to fairly report the unfurnishings and the dislocations of this crazy dormitory.

It was not, from appearances, a place which a tidy woman looked after. Neither was it regularly occupied. The water in the pitcher, as an indication, was stagnant and scummed with a surface film of dust.

The "Rev." Jeremiah Jowl occupied the rocking chair. He had just "raked in the stake;" and, *having done it by* "bluffing," he was secretly jubilant, and *threw himself back* with a quiet chuckle.

He was a man of large frame, but shaky in his joints,

and with loose abundant flesh. Face—smooth, with a half-moon fringe of greyish sandy whiskers under his chin. He wore large round-rimmed spectacles; was bald, excepting a scraggy remnant low down around the back of his head; had watery eyes of uncertain color; was slovenly in dress, and wore a Number Seven hat and a Number Eleven shoe.

According to the tenet of predestination, he entered this world just sixty years before, destined *generally*—to grow grey in the profanation of a holy cause; and *specifically*—to "sack" the wealthy credulous: for he certainly was an adept in winding up and manipulating their sympathies, and most successful in coaxing their cash through false and deceptive ingenuities.

He glowed with a whiskey fervor when relating to his dupes how that he was "permitted to work" as a "humble instrument;" as a "missionary without salary;" as a general co-laborer in "snatching brands from the burning." He said that his "field" was "'way down among the slums of the docks, and along the Bowery."

He certainly was a missionary; but his *unholy* mission was to misprofess, mislead and misdo. He was a projector and promoter of miscellaneous malfeasance. The livery of his calling was stolen. He dealt in the merchandise of the devil, and merited only mistrust, as an accomplice of the arch miscreant of all misdeeds.

As we already know Burle's character, we can understand how a natural affiliation and a mutual affinity drew these two together.

They had not settled to their game of cards without having first disposed of the important matter which was *so hastily adjourned*, a few hours previous at the *corner of Island Number Ten*.

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to challenge Burle's moods. He bided his time patiently.

The two men looked at each other across the table, and Burle finally yielded ungracious relief to Jowl's uncomfortable uncertainty. He continued,

"I said 'young', and I meant 'young'. He *was* young——"

"'*He*'?" again broke in Jowl unadvisedly.

"Now look here;" and Burle squared up an impatient and nearer address, bending across the table, "if I'm going to chin this amusing story, supposing you let me alone while I'm at it; or else go on and tell it yourself."

The old man made no retort to this senseless alternative: he discerningly held his peace. As a punative levy for the interruption, Burle "fortified" again. However, as the bottle this time returned to the table, Jowl cast an anxious graduating glance at its lowering contents, quietly got it into possession and stood it down protectingly by his own chair on the floor. Burle's eyes followed this proceeding, but having already secured three "straights", he made no objection. He proceeded to particulars:

"That cursed wobble-tub wasn't any old female at all, but a regular lightning clipper in disguise. And now I tell you, he ran me an everlasting leg-and-leg bog-stretch! He ain't no buffle head, and I say we've got to hedge."

"You think then that some one's lookin' up the child?"

"That's the size of it. *You* must help me run it in somewheres else. We've got to block against any knock-out surprises."

"Yes?"

Jowl didn't propose however to implicate himself

without a consideration; but he would listen first to what Burle might have to offer. He himself had a nut in reserve that promised lucrative cracking, and about which Burle evidently knew nothing. The Saturday afternoon's edition of "*The Eagle*" was in his pocket; and it contained an experimental offer of $500, for the return of the child.

"I had a 'Satan's own', legging it after that spying sham. She was the devil's daisy for a togged out skipper, and I was glad enough when she dove. Yes; she went under at a junk shop on Myrtle Avenue, just along by the Washington Park.

"Pretty soon she blowed again. Then, I tell you, I *was* hit foul. But I sized up the whole scheme. It wasn't a woman at all. It was a spry young fellow about twenty-one; and this time he'd dropped his petticoats. I tell you he was a rattler! He slipped me then in just about a holy minute. He went like a regular split-up from Hobuckin. He toddled like a Bible-carrier at grub call."

"Or a missionary before a ravenous Fejee;" suggested Jowl.

"Whatever you please," joined Burle, growing whiskey complacent: but he did not perceive the sly artfulness of the analogy. "He sloped in the direction of the slobber-gushers on Clinton Avenue, and there I lost him."

While Burle lived upon the products of excitation of sentimental phrensy, it by no means followed that such enthusiastic impressibility stood high in his esteem, save as a merchantable commodity. Perhaps else, he would not so rudely have characterized the dwellers *along the* Clinton thoroughfare.

"And you think that he was goin' to report to some one?"

"Not much doubt of it;" answered Burle.

"Think he carried anything definite?"

"How the devil should I know?" Burle submitted impatiently in reply. "I didn't overhaul him; and he didn't sit down on a door-step to give me any confidential snaffle."

"I think myself," now pursued Jowl, (with the offered reward secretly in his mind), "that the kid better be brought over here. Slushy could attend to it."

Slushy had been a ship's cook. Jowl had companioned with her now for several months past. He looked toward the bed as he made the suggestion.

Burle's eyes followed also; and without wishing to disparage Slushy's sober ability, there was certainly justifiable ground for his protest under present conditions. He commented with sarcasm,

"Yes, she's in a h—l of a condition, now ain't she, to trust out with a job like that!"

"Oh, well! She'll sober up."

"But when?"

"Well, 'f I lock her up in here, she'll come 'round by Monday afternoon."

"Is she so full as that?"

"Chock up. I found her on the stairs when I came back this evenin'."

Burle was disgusted. The emergency was a pressing one. "Can't you stiffen her spine any sooner? We don't know what risks we're running by putting off, even over Sunday."

"Dasn't *do it. Have to* tone her back by diminished *doses; gradual like. If* I should shut right down on

her as she is now, she'd split the roof up. You'll see her foragin' 'round for somethin', directly she wakes up."

Burle didn't like the delay. But he had become satisfied of *Jane's* deflection, therefore he could not trust *her* to bring the child over. He had decided that her partnership knowledge of it should cease as soon as possible. He doubted her more and more since Connie's return. Slushy only was available, therefore he asked, "When'll she be in condition?"

"Oh—say after to-morrow."

"You couldn't choke her short off, any way?" persisted Burle.

"No. 'Twouldn't do. She'd be crazy and unreasonable. Her nerves wouldn't git down steady. This ain't no apprentice job: it's got to be done cleverly. We don't want no botch. A bad flip now would muss the whole venture."

"How'll you manage the business?"

"Easy enough;" answered Jowl. "But *you* ought to know," he added meaningly. "But if you'll engage to manage your squeamish kicker over there, I'll go security on my part that Slushy'll slope with the chicken in correct style. The only trouble to anticipate is with Jane."

"D—n her! If she interferes in this now, I'll kill her;" spoke Burle wagging his head and setting his teeth. "If she keeps on as she has done for the last two months I'll split with her anyways; or else split her head. She's giving me no end of trouble."

"You're a stumblin' old fool anyway," now charged Jowl with considerable feeling, "not to let her boy go *away*. With him around, she's like a crazy cow, and

somebody a-teasin' her calf. Don't you know enough to stop it?"

Burle scowled; but he silently acknowledged the charge, inwardly cursing himself, now that trouble threatened, for not having heeded a similar suggestion made sometime ago by Jowl. He reflected for some moments about it. Then he made an effort and threw the matter from his mind, as an unpleasant complication that he would tackle hereafter. Stretching up across the table he demanded—to change the subject—,

"Wher've you hid that whiskey?"

"Don't drink too much;" cautioned Jowl handing it up reluctantly.

"I can stand it;" returned Burle recklessly. "I b'l've I could get outside a quart of the stuff and keep a level head on me."

"I don't know;" and Jowl shook his head in admonitory fashion. "It'll '*put* a head on *you*,' if you keep at it. Look at Slushy!"

Burle complied; scanning, as well as the dusky gloom permitted, that insensible ex-human heap. Slowly swallowing the liquor, he took the observation over the opposite rim of his whiskey glass. But he made no personal application of the warning. He was only wondering when the "awful example" would get into a safe condition for business. He put the glass down and went on with decision,

"I'll manage Jane, somehow. If I can't do it any other ways I'll choke her to it. I've done it before."

Jowl was not in sympathy with the choking method of persuasion. He believed in "wheedling rather than whaling." However *he* provoked the subject no further. *It was a dangerous one* always; and if Burle hadn't *been in a conciliatory* mood from the first influence of

the liquor, and a little cowed also on account of his anxiety about the child, he would not so quietly have taken what his companion already had said about his management of Jane.

"'Then," agreed Jowl, "I'll have Slushy over there in good shape, say—by four o'clock Monday, and she'll quietly take up the baby, wrap her shawl about it, and—'presto'; in half an hour the thing's done. But I won't go a step, in this matter, 'till you solemnly—promise me—two things."

The two conspirators looked at each other silently.

"Well?"

Burle dropped this monosyllable inquiringly, and as suggesting that he was waiting, and attentive; for Jowl's pause at this point had been a long one. And he yet continued silent.

Again Burle prompted, and this time with angry impatience,

"What the devil are they?"

"First;" slowly stipulated Jowl, leaning across the table, "that you don't—in any way—or for any purpose—or under any circumstances—let Jane know where the child has been taken to. And now, while I'm at the beginin' of the arrangement, I may as well stipulate that you have that girl out of the way, entirely: out of the house. You can manage so much; and it's no more than a necessary precaution, even though Jane don't know Slushy."

Burle still waited. His comanion had mentioned "'*two*' things" to be promised. As Jowl again paused for a considerable time, Burle took the opportunity to *ratify the* first condition. "Of course I'll do that. *I'd determined* on it, anyway. You needn't bother *about any* hitches at my end. Jane would make a fuss.

She'd be just the cursed fool to go off half-cocked. She'd try to prevent our taking the young one at all. I believe she'd carry it home to-morrow if she knew where it belonged. Judging from the way she's been kicking lately I wouldn't be surprised any time if she proposed to start a prayer meeting in 'The Island'!"

"There's just where I want to put a peg;" impressed Jowl. "She mustn't have any chance to spill our gravy. There may be—some money for us to divide in this little transaction."

Burle was up and alert in a moment. He tried to read Jowl's face. "You havn't——"

"Never you mind yet;" interrupted that worthy. "I'm leadin' up as fast as your susceptible temperament 'll bear. Now that word 'money' brings me to the second stipulation."

Again he paused provokingly.

"Well, old spill-your-brains!" now flared out Burle, losing all patience and letting his foot emphasize his feelings, "*will* you get on? Spit it out! I could do a job ten times while you're cackling about it."

"The second," replied Jowl, thus adjured, but not at all hurried, "is that you *divide* with me, in any way that we see money in this matter."

"I promise;" undertook Burle, without any hesitating ceremony. Which promise indeed, though an off-hand parole one, was nevertheless an agreement quite as likely to secure his observance as though attended by all the validating ceremonies of court, church and calendar. Not that it was likely he would ever have to do with a court, save as a compulsory, or a church save as a hypocritical servitor; or, to complete the round, *a calendar, save as a convict*, registered thereon for a *penitentiary term.*

THE FRAUDULENT COLONEL SPRANG TO HIS FEET. (Page 261.)

"You're driving at something more;" Burle now insinuated in a reconnoitering way, and looking sharply into Jowl's face.

Probably his conjecture caught confirmation there. Jowl was willing that it should. Some way must lead gradually up to the matter of the published reward, for Burle would be likely to remonstrate that Jowl's bargain was unfair, being made with anterior knowledge, priorly witheld from his companion.

"I'm sure there's a fly at the bottom of all this;" now insisted Burle. "What is there in it that you haven't told me about?" he pressed.

"Well, 'Colonel,'" began Jowl in acknowledgment, dwelling punctiliously on the title given, (he knew the conciliatory influence of this prefix,) "there *is* a little something else."

Burle waited without a word.

"There has been an offer of reward published."

The fraudulent colonel sprang to his feet.

"Does it surprise you?"

"Where it is?" Burle challenged peremptorily, without noticing the question: or, if he did, not deeming any answer necessary. "Fire it out;" he further demanded impatiently: "I hate this shuffling and haggling."

Jowl made no verbal answer. But he ceased rocking, leaned forward over the table and placed *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* before his companion. Just before falling back to resume his ease and oscillation, he indicated, by placing his finger upon it, a pencil-marked notice.

* * * * * *

"*On* Wednesday June 11th, last, at *about* 10 o'clock A. M., a female child, a *little* over one year old, was taken from a

baby carriage in Washington Park. If returned immediately, in whatever way chosen, (due allowance being made for any preliminary arrangement,) I will hand bearer *Five* One Hundred Dollar Bills, U. S. Treas'y currency; and ask no questions, and detain no messenger. I only seek to recover the child.

CRANDALL HARRINGTON,
—Clinton Avenue."

er reading this offer Burle turned the paper ly to learn the date.

his afternoon's edition;" he meditated. "Well," an oath, "this relieves me. They ain't quite us yet. I know now how the land lies. This is first call."

es;" insinuated Jowl: "*we both*——know."

rle looked across the table at him with a black ssion of countenance. He did not take the "we" y.

've never interfered with your hell-bosh! What ou mean? Do you propose to meddle with my ? Pour your hot soup down their throats, or their for aught I care. I don't trouble *you*, and I don't se to stand any dabbling with *my* broth."

wl had said nothing beyond the words, "We both ;" but his whole bearing was an insisting grin lf-proprietorship "in this boodle". And he meant act this proportion; though he wanted no disrupor violence about it. Burle would "come 'round." imidity would settle him if nothing else. But if then this manipulator held coercive leverage of essing suasion otherwise; which should be duly , if *persuasive* reminder of the second article of

the promise just made, continued to be disregarded. But he would not constrain where he could cajole.

Burle sat down again. The two men looked at each other.

"Isn't this my affair exclusively?"

"Well! No. Now Colonel, don't be disagreeable. Listen to my sermon. You've called on your right bower to help you. You've asked me to take a dangerous responsibility. Besides this, look back over our long friendship. Haven't I often given you points on Brooklyn shell-outs? We've pulled 'together', and *you've* got drunk—'together'; and I've shared you my bed—'together'. Do you want now to go off and gobble this plum down all alone? And after your promise! And too, when I've pointed it out to you! You ought to divide up willingly."

"You haven't run any risk;" argued Burle.

"But you ask me to now. And you know there ain't a better keep to lay low in than mine. And you must know too that you've got to get the child out'r that place within a mighty short time. We can both be pretty certain that they've struck the lead. They'll find out where it's kennelled; and we don't know now how close they may be onto it. By George! I didn't tell you that I found the peep-hole that your old toggle-heels was listenin' through; and cuss me if it was more'n ten inches from your mouth as you sat by that table!"

"The devil!" ejaculated Burle, now thoroughly scared.

"Yes;" continued Jowl; "right in that partition next *you*".

Burle's cowardice and lack of nerve in the face of *real danger* emergency was an all sufficient impulsion;

and now he offered not another objection. He was even eager. "If you'll manage getting the child over here at once, I'll snack an even-up with you."

And so it was settled: after which, Burle's mind too went back in retrospect, taking exactly the same course that had prompted with Jowl. "What'd I say?" And he pumped his memory reflectively. "Do you think they could catch on anywhere?"

"I—don't—remember—of anything we dropped very definite." And the old reprobate bent forward, humped his shoulders, wrinkled his face, blinked one eye, and with an index finger very intently pursued a crack along the top of the table. "But whether they did or did not, we'll head off their game by removin' the youngster."

"Yes," Burle returned; "everything'll be all right if they don't spring their snap onto us too soon."

"I don't think there's much danger of that. This feeler in *The Eagle* don't look 's though they knew where the child was. You've gone on serene for two months, and you must chance it now another thirty-six hours. I've told you honest; it won't do to trust Slushy a half-minute sooner. If *you're* a bit skeery, then, 'till the thing's well coppered, you can nark 'round on the sly; ready to jump out if anything contrary happens."

"Harrington—! Harrington—!" Burle was now pondering aloud. "Seems to me I've had that name on my list or heard it somewhere; and that lately too." But yet he didn't, thanks for once to the whiskey, definitely recall it. He would have been furious, had he remembered what Jane so recently confessed to him concerning *this man's* daughter; and that she was Connie's *Sunday-school* teacher.

As it was, his fears received a sharp prick when he recalled that the young fleet-heels had disappeared in the Clinton Avenue direction. *This notice* gave a Clinton Avenue address! He made little doubt now that they were winding nearer, and liable any day to get positively on the "lead".

"You mustn't leave this thing by the gills an hour later'n possible;" he enjoined nervously. And Jowl so promised.

Then the newspaper was again consulted; and Burle, after studying for some time, looked suddenly up and suggested,

"But we might just as well sweat him for five *thousand* as for five hundred—perhaps."

"Well—perhaps;" coincided Jowl: "but meantime that'll keep. We'll decide hereafter. The old duffer's a fat goose, and he must shell out handsome. Let's drink to his *Thousands*."

And they did so, in the raw whiskey. At least they were *about* to do so, and Burle had raised the liquor nearly to his lips, when he suddenly paused and replaced it on the table. Seeing him do so, Jowl likewise put his own glass down; and Burle's puzzled and somewhat anxious look prompted him hastily to inquire,

"Anything wrong?"

"You'll have to go it cautious if he's any old crab that's twigged my racket. If he tumbles to it that I'm in this swim, I'll go a thousand to one, he'll hump his back. And then perhaps, if he once gets the child, he'll let us whistle for our pecuniary."

Jowl nodded his head. "Of course all this is to be —'*managed*.' He mustn't know you or me either; nor

any of our female relations, in these negotiations. You're crazy to think it. I'll engineer the trade."

So then they drank off their whiskey.

After this, a couple of cigars; and then they gradually settled into a more convivial conversational mood. Since the thing was concluded, settled as much as it could be for the immediate present, Burle was disposed to throw it off his mind. To change the subject therefore, he inquired,

"How've you made it through the week?"

Jowl tipped back, threw his legs across the corner of the table and answered with an air of gloating triumph,

"I harpooned a regular slosh-bucket."

Immediately Burle was interested.

"Yes sir! One o' those weepin' benevolents!"

Burle:—"Where?"

Jowl:—"Wall street."

Burle:—"Could I work him?"

Jowl:—"Well you might try. He lives in Brooklyn."

Burle:—"What's his name?"

Jowl:—"Credulo."

Burle:—"What d'you 'pull' him for?"

Jowl:—"He tumbled out a cool—green—crumpled—'fifty'."

Burle:—"Holy smoke! That *was* a riffle! You worked the gospel strong on him?"

"Yes;" Jowl went on with complacency and an impromptu poetical streak; "I confess it. I called on him with my usual self-abnegatin' purpose, and—

"I touched his liver
From my quiver
With my 'Curbstone Chapel' whopper;
My 'poor man's succor'

By the river;
The sullen silent shiv'rin' river - - -
. . . . . .
Riv - - er."

Jowl was easily affected by liquor. His last drink had unlimbered him. Getting into the jolly stage of the whiskey's influence he rattled his feet as though applauding, rolled up his eyes and quavered his voice upon the last syllable with a rising inflection of lugubrious mock mummery.

"Well! '*Riv* - - er,' then! D——n it! *Have* it 'River.' But *go—on*, and tell us about it;" put in Burle, foaming as usual at Jowl's "forever deferred" communications.

"In a h—l of a hurry; a'n't you?" inquired Jowl with deliberate whiskey solemnity. However he rallied his faculties, which manifested an inclination to collapse into a sleepy content, and with a waked-up show of bubbling ebriety, (which Burle didn't approve, or meet half way, not being a man who easily yielded to a liquor effluence,) he proceeded,

"*Well, I will.*" This determination he expressed with very loud effusiveness, further impressed by placing a finger point upon his nose.

"Yes: do! Tell all the Bobbies on this beat!" suggested Burle sarcastically. Jowl's voice showed that it had been strongly reinforced.

The hint was opportune. Jowl got up, stretched himself; and by two or three very hard winks and a few energetic passes with doubled fists into the air, he succeeded in shaking off the tangling influence that *was laying* hold of him. Thus finally steadied, standing with one foot raised and resting in his chair, and taking up the narrative, this time in a tone modulated

more to the discretionary necessities of present environment, he drew in a long breath and related:

"I'd notched him before. Several times I'd watched him walkin' up Wall street. He had a mighty drawin' air. Looked just like a crazy gusher that slopped his benevolence 'round, careless like.

"It came about, first, like this. I got the tip one day on the curb, from Stile's blind (?) Jenny. I'm blessed if she hadn't sized up the cuss for fifty cents. And she got the money too.

"Says I to Jowl, 'The Reverend Jeremiah's a lame slouch, if he can't duplicate Jen's cents with "Curb stone Chapel" Dollars!' And by the horned Satan, I did!

"I followed th' old gum-drop, and found out who he was: 'n' I took his number.

"I played him on the quiet, an' giv' him lots of line. He was wuth it.

"I fixed his prescriptions, and sent him the first batch. B'gosh! He read 'em all! Sucked down th' whole of th' taffy and probably wished there was more. Any way, I served him a second tick'ler.

"While I was gettin' him well primed, and jus' about closin' down on his squeak, I called on that sickly saint——"

Jowl paused and tapped the table impatiently.

"Him that peddles out the deputy gos' at—Cuss the snipe! I can't seem to get him;" and Jowl snapped his fingers with more impatience. "Why, he's Dr. McCoddlemee's supe'."

Suddenly recalling the lost name, dropping his foot and settling down into his chair, he continued, "Oh yea! *Pastor Takemein.*" His muddled brain having yielded, *Jowl now* went on again cheerfully,

"This Credulo," (Jowl pronounced the name "Creduly") "he goes to McVeigh's church. I found that out over'n Brooklyn. And this Takemein, he married McVeigh's old shrimp daughter. Now I'm gettin' out'r the woods;" and going on with freedom, Jowl pursued his narrative:

"So then I calculated from this little circumstance that Credulo would remember him.

"Sure 'nough; so he did. But I'm gettin' too fast.

"Takemein didn't—'place no obstructions in the Lord's way', when I asked a letter from him;" continued this blasphemous hypocrite. "He just flopped right down and made white paper swaller the whole business.

"He giv' me a roarin' voucher, just spangled over with the fulsome bosh I put into him. And, my boy," pointing this witticism with his long finger, "he giv' it to me—wholly on my face! Just scrutinize my open countenance now, Colonel. Don't it look appealin'?"

"Yes," acquiesced Burle crustily; "especially your wrinkled old mug. That's always appealing—for whiskey. Take some, and go on with your blubbery yarn. It's getting interesting."

"I've got that little endorsement back;" chuckled Jowl. "Them kind o' credentials is always convenient when somebody gits on his ear, and th' ways don't slip s' easy as usual. I tell you, that letter puts me up—high! 'Strugglin' by th' wayside to rescue stumblin' stragglers from th' ditches! Not earnestly supported ——'"

Jowl puckered his face as though taking a dose of *medicine*; and his memory too, in trying to recall *these* telling phrases—"'Not earnestly supported by

The City Missionary Society.' And then something about, 'Be it said to their shame;' because I a'n't invited to fodder at that crib: only he didn't express it quite so blunt. And a lot more of such lopsy-gopsy that I stuffed him with.

"But he came near forgettin' th' clincher I mos' wanted. But I jogged in time, and he tumbled. He put it down something like this:—'Laborin' in th' vineyard *without any stated support.* Doin' a work of mercy *without price.* Battl'in' agin th' prince o' darkness, *without maintenance*'; and so on."

"After gettin' this little fulminatin' cap, I called again on the am'able Wall street duffer. 'Yes: he'd received my pamphlets and was greatly interested and impressed.'

"I smiled an abnegatin' Curb-Stone-Chapel smile on him, and then handed out Takemein's letter. The old cheese! He 'took it in,' sure 'nough! He read it all through; ve-r-y slow.

"I kinder dropped, careless like, that the gentleman that sent the letter, I b'lieved, married Dr. McVeigh's daughter. He didn't say anything, but jus' nodded his head and kep' on readin'.

"I see he was clipped; and when he got it read down I put in and filled away. I pumped into him 'till he was chock. I pictured it all out to the old muff. I slathered sin on th' pave to save souls, and I pawned my last shirt to buy soup to save starvin' bodies. I got hoarse and caught cold in all weathers, pleadin' with famishin' sinners, and offerin' 'em th' bread o' life on th' half-shell. I wrastled with sin, 'till I busted my collar button, slit my suspenders, and tore holes in my clothes. Th' 'Reg'lar Cloth wouldn't help me, because

couldn't stand the smudge.

"Oh—I put it to him steep; and, my boy," leaning over, stretching forth his long arm and slapping Burle on the shoulder, "he riz to the fly!

"Yes sir: when I stopped for breath, he jus' took th' bait and declaimed the business to suit 'mself.

"Presently, as he kep' goin' on, he got real red in the face, because th' White-Chokers wouldn't take off their kid gloves and buck in with me. By thunder! If they tried it once, I'd boot 'em out of Roosevelt Square. No; you mind! I don't giv' it away to them —much. Them's *my* preserves. They mustn't poach there.

"After I got him fairly to talkin', I kep' screwin' up a hitch now and then: a' pilin' on, inch by inch, more steam, an' more agony. A suggestin' hint here, and a kind of sufferin' reminder there; until he fairly sizzled. He was bilin', an' he jus' grabbed the lever and giv' me no more show. Then it was a down grade and the throttle wide open. He pictured th' thing out, until his imagination got me to workin' like an old Bowery fireman; just doin' a break-'er-down business, a-pluckin' fire brands from a hell of sin an' destruction, an' nobody else to take a hand at th' brakes.

"At that point, I thought he'd had line enough; an' for fear he'd unduly exhaust hisself, I scooped 'im in.

"He landed very handsome. As I before remarked;—Fifty national flimseys! Now he's on my regular list for another touch-up when th' brands gits well burnin' ag'in; an' nobody but me to snatch 'em."

"How much did you make last year?" And as *Burle* asked the question he pushed the whiskey over *to His Irreverence.*

Jowl accepted the challenge, and they both drank again.

"Oh—a couple, or three thousand; more or less."

An evasive response: and, by the way, quite as slippery as the respondent.

"What do you do with it all? You don't seem to sling 'round much of it."

"Never you mind, my son. It's salted away. I may start a bible factory with it some day. I'll manage that."

"Don't anybody on your 'List' ever ask you to account?"

"Well, yes. Some of 'em has had the audacity to hint that way. But bless you! Slingin' bread, soup, soap, gospel an' clothes, as I do, how can I be a bookkeeper an' everything else too! So I look hurt, an' they don't press th' point. I remind 'em that it's askin' th'Almighty to take particular notice an' credit 'em with exactly so many dollars; as they may want it all strictly accounted for when they get up there.

"Of course I don't put it to 'em in those words: but that's the gist."

"You're a bad one!" summed up the fraudulent Colonel. "You've got cheek enough to supply a brass pavement for all hell." Then changing the subject:—"I suppose you'll be on the street again to-morrow?"

"To-day, you mean;" corrected Jowl. "It's Sunday mornin' now, old boy. Let 's 'Another charge to keep,' and so forth."

They took "another", accordingly.

"Yes: you'll find me down along th' Roosevelt Ferry this afternoon. I've got some women from 'The Christian *Union*' *to sing*: and a greeny Junior from 'The *Theolog*. . He's goin' to jaw th' crowd.

"'Pay him?' No:. I don't. Not much; and don't you forget it! He wants to sling his lip in th' vineyard. Why shouldn't I giv' him a good open chance, so far 's th' shoutin's concerned?"

"You'll have the soup and bread passed 'round?"

"Oh yes! They reckon on that. Costs me about four dollars a week for th' 'grub' part of the flummery. But I have to do that much to keep up appearances, *an' draw the crowd.*"

Having finished at cards, Burle once more recurred nervously; "About to-morrow; and the arrangement; —I mean as to getting the child away."

Jowl thought a moment. "I'll come over to Th' Island, and look in on you—say, about twelve o'clock. Then we'll have 'till almost three, to plan any further necessary preliminaries. Directly after that I must be back on th' Square. Again on duty in th' evenin', at seven: and then I'm through with th' day's programme. You can come over and meet me here at—well, ten o'clock; and we'll have all night before us to patch it up.

"It's a little ticklish to handle;" he resumed thoughtfully, "and I must straighten out Slushy first; and afterwards, instruct her. Ther's Connie too. You must arrange to kinder get him off on some errand. But we'll talk that over too. It'll keep. The most I'm feared about is that jade of yours. She's gettin' so stiff in th' neck! She's a catamaran! Mind she ain't inconveniently allowed to pull out th' tail board, just as we've started up th' hill."

"Curse her!" muttered Burle with a black scowl. "*I'll have* to wring her neck. But I'd rather not, this *trip.*"

"*Don't* let's open up again on that;" interrupted

Jowl. "Take a caulker and go home. I want to turn in."

The old man looked toward the bed dubiously. He was getting drowsy.

Poor degraded Slushy! She occupied the most of the mattress! In an uncomfortable transverse heap, there she lay: just as Jowl, after picking her up in the hall, had tumbled her on.

Burle was about to drink off his last potion (poison) as Jowl's face turned back to the table. The old "Curbstone-Chapel" fraud hastily proceeded to join his compeer. Pouring out a dose corresponding, he raised his glass toward Burle's, proposing,—

"The Baby!"

Poor little Crissie! Such a toast was indeed a deadly augury for her; and in that significance, no doubt, very properly drank silently, standing.

After it, this charlatan pietist joined hands with the juggling "Colonel," gaped sleepily, bid him "Take care of yourself my son;" and then held the door ajar while his crony groped down the crazy stairs.

CHAPTER XX.

INVESTIGATION.

A chapter wherein is consulted a startling record.

Jip presented himself at the office: he asked permission to see Dr. Jourdan. He was very much out of breath. *He had* been running.

"; *the doctor is* not in. Will you wait?"

The young man in charge was not favorably impressed by young Foxhard, and his manner was discourteous. Discourtesy is always an error. This young man made a further mistake in gauging the applicant by the apparel. Jip's face and frousy red hair inhibited against him. But he was full of the importance of a weighty errand, and with no idle time then to notice or resent malapertness. He only thought to himself, "You saucy monkey! I may take your scalp later on." But for the present he inquired, meekly enough,

"How long'll I hev to wait?"

It was about half past eleven, A. M. The young would-be therapeutist looked lazily back over his shoulder, interrogating the office time piece. Then he fixed his indolent regard upon the eager applicant. He estimated him with an imitative attempt at high-bred languor. Commencing at his boots, this supercilious study led up slowly and paused finally at the crown of Jip's ravelled straw hat. All this was pursued very tiresomely, and affected with a conceited sighing air, as of tolerant sufferance: at the same time, with his dextral forefinger he was marking off his estimate of the doctor's probable absence, upon the digits of his left hand. After reaching the fourth he paused. This droop-washy suspension may have been necessary to the recuperation of exhausted mental efflux. At all events it occurred just as his far-away sleepy eyes had reached the top of the hat aforesaid. Pressing it back, (the finger, not the hat,) he drew a long sigh and slowly communicated in a drawling perfunctory tone of voice,

"Four hours—and a half."

Jip, all aglow with his momentous news, and very *anxious*, and very proud also in anticipation of its

delivery, experienced a smothered sensation of disappointment upon encountering this dampner. And so offensively cast at him! But this feeling was quickly succeeded by a revulsion; and then, hot resentment stirred within him, because of the disdainful disparagement, so undisguisedly insinuated. Meantime the young dandy student's unmannered air further peevishly insisted,

"Do—go—away—young fellah. Your *outré* appearwance annoys me."

Young Foxhard approached very closely upon this sprout of queasiness, and without any betrayal of intention, suddenly saluted him, at a point-blank face-to-face range, with a terrific Comanche whoop,

"Yi! Yi!! YI!!!—!—!—!"

Then falling back just out of range, he admonished with sarcasm,

"Wake up! W-A-K-E U-P, little tiddlewink!"

And this specimen of the species (now called "dude") did wake up. He made a quicker motion than had exacerbated his corporeal humor for seventeen months. But Jip had departed out of the way.

The poor fellow wandered forth with four heavy hours to weigh upon his impatient disquietude, and wrestling all the time with a tugging pricking inclination to communicate the matter to Letty.

He skirted about Mr. Harrington's stable; and he watched Dennis pothering about the door-way. Now Dennis, as we know, was Jip's messenger to Letty; and a good kind intermediary he had always been. But, holding his pledge to the doctor inviolate, the boy resisted the allurement and fled the temptation.

To: he must keep faith, and communicate this pre*ve discovery first* and only to Dr. Jourdan.

"W-A-K-E UP, LITTLE TIDDLEWINK!" (Page 278.)

Four o'clock came at last and found him back and again impatiently confronting the young corpuscle. Another bodily spasm threatened, but Dr. Jourdan, hearing the lad's anxious voice, called out from within,

"That you Jip?"

"Yes ma'am;" eagerly answered Jip, with a form of gender somewhat confused from his flutter.

"Come right in;" requested the doctor.

"*Now* what do you think?" said Jip's eyes to the atom as he walked past it. This dude'l'dandy certainly had, at that moment, some sluggish cerebral pulsations. A strained courtesy might denominate them—thoughts. But we hasten after Jip.

"What more have you found out?" anxiously inquired Dr. Jourdan.

Friday's report, as we have already learned, was made the day previous. It was upon this information that a continuance of espionage in the disguise of the peddler woman had been resolved upon.

His adventure of the morning was now related by Jip; the exploit warmly commended by the doctor; Burle's cruel scheme vaguely guessed at from the fragmentary phases caught, and then these goodly plotters deliberated, "What next?"

How indeed would their conclusions have been modified had the fact of Burle's lurking pursuit been known! We don't think that Dr. Jourdan, with such a confirmatory hint, would have delayed one moment in calling upon the police to make instant descent; even though, upon the enlightenment thus far obtained, such would have been a "chance" irruption. We must remember, in his justification, that the disappointments *had already* been many. They had come as conclusions upon what purported to be equally promising in-

vitations. For these reasons every one had grown less inclined to accept and act precipitately.

The doctor reflected long and thoughtfully, while Jip waited respectfully. He adopted finally the resolution to consult with the Secretary of The Society of Organized Charity. He knew that this Association had records of many of the families in Island Number Ten; and very likely these registries would include histories of the inmates of Numbers Thirty and Twenty-eight. If so, something important might then be learned about these people; their habits, practices, and characteristics. All this might lead perhaps to a better knowledge of how to deal with them; what to expect, what exigencies of accident or incident to anticipate or provide against.

Dr. Jourdan was assuming a responsibility in delaying, even one hour, in communicating the hinted discovery to Mr. Harrington. But we can look down into this young man's secret thought and read the one partial motive. His heart, more and more, sought alliance with the noble woman who battled so steadfastly for her child. Each day was he mindful of the bated breaths that her life hung upon. When alone, he was strangely affected in meditating how gallantly she bore up. But after all, at what an expense of nervous draught!

With all her tenacity of fibre she was a woman still. She was a mother! He could mark the wear of a driving, a pitiless sorrow. And oh, how he longed to help her! To be permitted to share the burden with her! And above all, how he longed so to compass possibilities, that she should afterwards turn gratefully

as the one through whose instrumentality this

ing weight had been lifted.

The opportunity was the lover's treasure, though born of distressful travail to the object of his love! Can we blame him that he sought to pursue it alone? Might not its issue, if favorable, incline her to ratify to him in exchange, the marvellous treasure of her love!

But individual agency, so narrowly bounded in scope, can offer but doubtful reliance in the guidance of many-sided incident. So circumscribed is a single will, that, in a thousand complexities abroad, the bearing of other suasion or the control of other influences may intervene to divert the trend of a destiny.

It was even so now. In respect to the discovery of little Crissie, another move was in progress, entirely at counter-purpose with Dr. Jourdan's plans, and calculated therefore to disrupt them.

But he did not know of it.

We refer to the newspaper notice which Jowl gave Burle to read in the Corlear-Hook den, and which Mr. Harrington had sent down for insertion in that afternoon's *Daily Eagle*. We have already remarked its semi-secret character. It was a half-desperate resort; and adventured because Mr. Harrington felt that he must continue in the doing of *something*, and nothing better seemed left now to undertake. He had consulted with no one in the matter, and Dr. Jourdan knew nothing of the intended publication.

Such a knowledge might have hastened or modified the doctor's plans. The offer would of course beget a motive with Jowl and Burle for renewed diligence in the secret detention of the child. Through this advertisement, a rich man's resources invited rogues to parley *for gain;* and the greater the certainty of control as *to the commodity*, the more positive would be the realization of advantageous mercenary brokerage.

Dr Jourdan, just then, was proceeding upon the theory that the success of an undertaking is jeopardized in proportion as the number of inexperts in its management is multiplied. He had decided, inasmuch as progress thus far had so promisingly attended this dual detective partnership, that for a day or two longer he would risk its continuance without additions.

Very much yet remained to be done, and too many minds about the doing thereof might embarrass accomplishment. The wedge had barely entered. It yet stood unsteadily; and before the blows should be given that were intended to split this mystery, it were wise to gently tap a surer inception, and thus certify delivery of purpose when the heavier strokes should follow.

The Yankee notions *incognita* (so they both supposed), had proved a successful one. It would bear another day's use. The old lady was accordingly directed to hover about again on the day following (Sunday): not with a view of venturing deeper, unless the opportunity came easily and naturally; but rather for the purpose of making certain that no upsetting changes in the present situation should occur without their knowledge.

Both Jowl and Burle therefore had an opportunity, and this time a leisurely one, of curiously studying Jip's movements in a disguise which was no longer illusory to them.

They were glad to see him about again. His reappearance confirmed them in the conclusion that his discoveries had not yet been positive.

"Let the little boy have his masquerading fun;" quietly sneered Jowl. "His sneakin' jobbery needs *sharper conduct if* they would match our wit. And so,

our thanks to you, my dear!" he sniggered, apostrophizing him derisively. "We're certainly obliged for your timely warnin', and we'll take particular care to remove the cause of your anxiety—by to-morrow!"

Ah Jip! You tarried too long. In your eagerness to swell a good weight of information, to put on "*just one more*," you have toppled over the load. The whole is now scattered and exposed. Though we may wish it never so much, the ruinous storm will not wait upon your recovery. The cloud is already coming up black behind you. Worse indeed is it for those whom you serve, because you have not perceived, and therefore cannot warn them.

Meantime the doctor, not knowing of this miscarriage, followed his project, ignorant of its threatened disruption.

One of the preliminary steps, as already mentioned, was his consultation with the Secretary of The Relief Society. All things arranged therefore, in the early evening he called upon Mr. Grey at the latter's residence, took him into confidence and communicated the situation.

And now we are to record a cotemporaneous Saturday night's conference. It was not held at an hour as *late* as the one in Jowl's garret. But the object was common, to wit: the removal of little Crissie from Island Number Ten. But in the one instance there was the generous purpose of the rescuers; and in the other, the guilty scheme of the conspirators!

After the narration by Dr. Jourdan, it was deemed expedient at once to consult the records at the office. Thither they repaired, and at nine o'clock both gentlemen were seated at the society's headquarters.

The busy day, the busy week, was past; and the

great building was quiet in the solitude of a moonlit Saturday night.

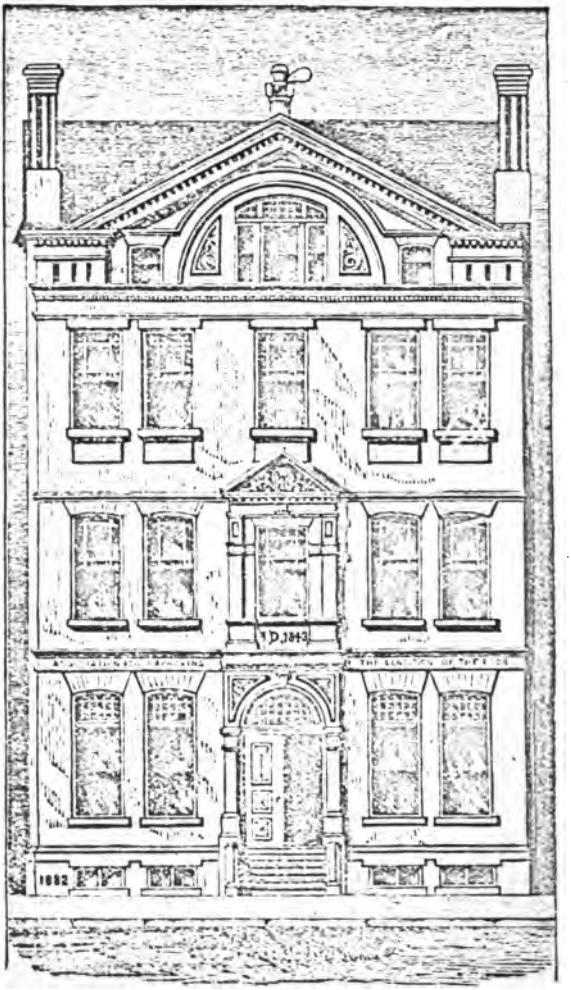
The Secretary opened a mammoth safe, and the backs of fifty-nine large volumes were disclosed. Taking down a Sub-Index, he turned to "Island Number Ten." Among other items of information under this reference was found a "List of Tenants." The number "Twenty-eight" gave Jane Stanhope's name.

This now ascertained, the "GREAT INDEX" was next consulted, and this book gave the special volumes and the pages therein, where from time to time had accumulated the disgraceful testimonials of those methods about which we have already had account.

More than an hour was spent in this examination. The record was very full; and it comprehended not only a description of Burle's system, and his artful plans for manœuvring the confidences of those whom he deceived, but it gave also minutes of individual characteristics, and sketches of the personal histories of both the wily principal and his compelled accomplice. There was also an estimate of the amounts they deceptively obtained: and finally, a long list of the names of persons who were known to have been approached; some successfully and others unsuccessfully, by this alms-jobber.

"I am astonished!" exclaimed Dr. Jourdan. "*Where* did you, and *how* did you get it all?"

"As in other instances," replied Mr. Grey, "the statistical part of the record accumulated naturally in the ordinary course of office business. But the important narrative details were obtained, in this case as often in others, from a party once acquainted, a tenant perhaps in the same house, but later, separated and living *elsewhere*.



THE GREAT BUILDING WAS QUIET IN THE SOLITUDE OF A MOONL
SATURDAY NIGHT. (Page 395.)

"The attention of this office has many times been directed to these people. Our members from various parts of this city, have frequently sent us for investigation, the letters received by them from Jane Stanhope, in which she petitioned for assistance. These letters were stereotyped in phrase, but diverse in narrative. Their receipt was frequent enough to warrant the conclusion of systematic professional practice. Just at this juncture an opportunity offered which enabled me, without trouble, to fill out all the minutiæ of a most ingenious jugglery."

"Pray, how was that?" asked Dr. Jourdan, greatly interested.

"In this way;" related the Secretary: "I was engaged, as usual, *one* morning three years ago, in attending upon the necessities of applicants. There came into my private reception-room a decrepit old lady. Now, a person so many years in the business as I have been, becomes acquainted with tenement localities, and, as a related connection, with the reputations habitudes and doings of many of the hardened characters who live about in them. In the interviews that I am constantly having with individuals among these people, good and bad, I am often able, incidentally, to pick up very much relative information. This, when properly assembled, throws much light upon the practices of doubtful characters, and exposes them at times when they are not fixed out in their masks for investigation.

"It happened so in this case. The woman stated that once she had lived in 'Smoky Hollow'. Now, many years ago, Burle also had rooms in 'Smoky Hollow'. Remembering this, I named him, and asked *the old lady* if she had known of such a person while *there.*

"'Why, bless you! Yes:' she replied, 'I nussed his gal, poor Jane Stanhope, for three months: and I tell you, 'twas nip-an'-tuck with her! We didn't know whether the poor abused thing w'd go, or whether that horrid old cur' (meaning Burle) 'w'd keep her a spell longer for his devilish ways'.

"Having already a partial record of this Burle's doings, I had been looking for such an opportunity to fill it out. Encouraging the old lady therefore, who was quite disposed to be communicative, I learned that during the period of sickness mentioned, this miserable woman confessed herself a very unwilling tool in Burle's hands. The sorrowful confidences which naturally sprang up between nurse and patient, the poor heart-sick creature not expecting at the time to live, gave the attendant the whole story; and she in turn was able to relate it to me.

"You would be astonished to know of the amounts that crawling rascal raked in during the period of this woman's illness. It was a horrible farce with this fellow as business manager. Whenever there was likelihood of a visit, he was on hand, privately secreted in the adjoining room. Upon such occasions he withdrew the nurse also into his part of the premises, and the miserable decoy was left alone, to play her part upon the compassionate victims who came in response to letters received. This woman's passive wrong and the shuffling rehearsal in fraud that was forced upon her, for once, may have been excused by her condition. At this time indeed she was able only at intervals to gasp out an uncertain word or two.

"But all the better, this, for his plan. Her appearance *alone was sufficient*: and an occasional motioned

'yes' or 'no' as the pitying caller prompted or questioned, was enough.

"The nurse affirms that, during this period, money for— 'A month's rent', was sometimes received many times in a single day.

"Taking advantage of conditions to which he artfully conformed, Burle, at this time, sent out letters of only three or four lines, counterfeiting a trembling hand. There was no attempt in them at continuous relation. Only a few effective words or sentences. I will show you an example."

Turning the leaves of the report in hand, one was soon found. It bore no date, and dispensed with all formalities of address. It ran, in very illegible characters,

"If friend to humanity—for God's sake— quick—— I am a woman— dying—— come."

Then at the bottom was counterfeited, in a hand cruelly suggestive of the unsteadiness of a sinking sufferer, the name and address.

"Thus the torture and the piracy went on; Burle meantime evincing the greatest cunning in selecting his victims. He preyed upon those most unlikely to suspect deceit. He is a sharp trickster in this 'fraudulent-getting' business."

"And you tell me," Dr. Jourdan interrupted in a tone of remonstrance, "that this fellow has for more than three years past, been carrying on this degrading business of imposition. That he has practised *all this* upon the good people of Brooklyn!"

"*Yes; including* many of the 'good people' of New *York also.*"

"And that this Society does nothing to interrupt his criminal practices!"

"No;" quietly returned the Secretary, "I am not aware that I said anything of *that* kind."

"But," pursued Dr. Jourdan in some heat, "why don't you publish him?"

"We have published him, wherever and whenever we have had opportunity so to do, in the way open to us."

"But not in the Papers;" insisted Dr. Jourdan. "Why not sketch him and his methods in the public prints, and thereby warn people?"

"Because," answered the Secretary, "we don't wish to increase the gainfulness of his abominable craft."

"The reason that you give seems anomalous;" objected Dr. Jourdan. "If people knew that he was a designing dissembler, they certainly would not offer themselves as his victims."

"I have read," answered Mr. Grey, "that 'Ifs' have lost many Generals many battles'. '*If* people *knew*,' they would not, as you say, wittingly consent to be victimized. But those who are not members here, and who know very little about this Society's work, would question our conclusions, as published in a newspaper article. I speak of course of the general public."

He went on further to explain. "All of *our* subscribers, who regard common prudence, and refer letters from unknown writers to us, are protected. A few who are not members here, would perhaps be profitably warned by a newspaper notice, and, relying on the society, refuse the case when the attempt should get around to them. But not so the majority of citizens. And now I will explain to you how such a *newspaper article* is liable not only to defeat its own *ose, but worse*, often operates as a positive fur

therance to the wicked schemes of the fraudulent alms-seeker.

"No public journal, with regard for a sentiment of fairness among general readers, irrespective of what the editor's individual convictions might be in the premises, would refuse to publish a reply to any such attack from us; for as an attack it would be construed. Now such an answer would, of course, take the tone of a defence. If the Paper selected by us for such an *exposé*, while consenting to publish it, yet refused the party attacked an equal hearing in its columns before the public, then some other Journal might open its pages for this purpose; if for no other reason perhaps than to make capital out of what might be characterized as a neighbor's one-sided prejudice.

"You may be sure that a reply would appear somewhere and somehow; and probably in a way to reach quite as many eyes as had perused the introductory charge. Now, in such reply, the rogue would posture piteously, to a too-ready-to-be-deceived public. He would denounce our published report as false and cruel. His plea would run the whole gamut of a wily trickster's appeals, under the masquerading mantle of oppressed poverty in pathetic entreaty. It would represent a wayside starveling as the vindictive object of a great corporation's cruel persecution. And I will ask you," concluded the Secretary, "where the general public are likely to stand, after the conclusion of the controversy; remembering, if you please, that in this city there are upwards of three quarters of a million of people; and that not more than fifty thousand of them know very much about this Society; and that the *case presents itself* to the average reader as 'Persecution *versus* Poverty'?"

"You speak," responded the doctor, "as though you had been through some embarrassing experiences in this behalf."

"You have guessed correctly;" warmly rejoined Mr. Grey. "We *have* 'had experiences' in attempting to try such criminals in the public journals; and very disagreeable experiences I assure you they have been. The trouble is here:—The jury of general readers is too unwieldy in the first place; and, secondly; it is characterized by such a preponderating sympathetic bias that conclusions of reason are obstructed.

"There can be no satisfactory disposition of such cases in the public prints. At best it is simply an irregular altercation, without rule or restraint as to method or materiality of evidence offered. The aggressor, so labeled (and libelled too) is liable to come out second best, notwithstanding his disinterested championship in behalf of the interested public. We took the risk, not long ago, of publishing the vagabond practices of one of this ilk, and we got no thanks from the citizen. Barely escaping a speculative suit for damages in the courts, we received in the end, an impudent note without signature from the 'Victim of (our) oppressive prejudices,' recommending us to—— 'do the thing again,' as it had—— 'vastly increased his "revenue"'!

"You now understand my reasons for concluding that the public press is not the proper forum in which to charge malfeasance."

"Is there no remedy?"

"Yes: there is available, the same Executive check that is interposed where any citizen has suffered on account *of another's* criminality. If a man forcibly *enters your house* in the night time and goes away with

your silver ware, you don't, after finding him out, go to the Organization for the Prevention of Crime, and request its officers to publish his name in the newspapers as a warning to others. Nor do you undertake yourself to manage a trial of the case in the public journals. Rather, you take your complaint into a legal tribunal of justice. Neither should you, when robbed of ten dollars through the methods of such a pretender as Burle, seek out an association for the suppression of mendicancy, and undertake to avert the further perpetration of like wrong by procuring such society to publish him in a daily paper as a juggling imposter.

"No: you have your remedy in the courts, as sufficiently as though the act was a theft of the same ten dollars from your house in the night time."

He still continued; "As auxiliary aids, the Society for the Prevention of Crime, and the Association for the Suppression of Mendicancy, may do much, priorly, towards protecting the citizen, in a preventive or cautionary capacity. But, the wrong once accomplished, these organizations can neither of them redress it. They may point out a way of avoidance for the future, but they cannot punish for the past.

"Does not our whole social polity point to the Judiciary as the proper agency to deal with committed crime? This Society is glad beforehand to protect the citizen, who will accept our safe-conduct, from the premeditated raids of professional mendicant sharpers; for we have their histories. It would be impossible for one of them to ply, for instance, such a vocation as Burle does, if begging letters from unknown applicants were uniformly referred by their recipients to us."

Pointing to the mammoth safe he concluded, "Within *that repository* are more than twenty-seven thousand

pages of records of wrong-doing of this kind. The compilation comprises the results of more than forty years of investigations and explorations among these people; and no fraudulent getter of money, under the mask of necessitous pretence, can operate a single season without becoming enrolled there."

The doctor, his mind yet dwelling on methods of redress where prevention had not been availed of, recurred with this hypothetical inquiry; "You say that the courts are the remedial agencies, and that this Society is a preventive one. Supposing then, neglecting or being in ignorance of this protective interponent, I have suffered from some fraudulent begging imposter who has inveigled me out of five dollars on a false plea?"

"Then you should, in behalf of good order, seek redress for such an offence, just as you would in the case of any other misdemeanor, to wit: In the Legal Tribunals."

"Exactly: so you have said. But is there a definite law which covers such a case?"

"Why, certainly. This species of wrong is as clearly defined a crime as is larceny or burglary. Our Corporate law, in the first place, enacts against common mendicancy. Further; we have a State law which provides—But let me refer you to the Statute itself;" and taking down a volume, Mr. Grey read:—

"'Every person who with intent to cheat or 'defraud another, shall designedly, by color of any 'false token or writing, or by any false pretense, 'obtain from any person any money, personal 'property or valuable thing, FOR ANY ALLEGED CHARITABLE *purpose*, upon conviction thereof, shall be 'punished by imprisonment in a State Prison, not 'exceeding three years, or in a County Jail not ex

'ceeding one year, or by a fine not exceeding three 'times the value so obtained, or by both such fine 'and imprisonment.' "

"Do you suppose that if Burle was indicted under that law, and Jane Stanhope and her son were held and should give State's evidence of his practices, that he would escape? That she would do so I have no doubt. The miserable creature has no sympathy with him in what she does. She is coerced, and acts, as it were, under duress."

"Why don't some one then, who has been victimized, make complaint?" expostulated the doctor.

"I can suggest several interrupting conditions, any one of which might operate to withhold a prosecution. The amount in any single instance is small. Again, the common modicum of moral courage in the individual don't seem to be up to the necessary standard. It involves a confession. Men don't like publicly to admit that they have been dupes. Further, besides such an unpleasant notoriety, the trouble of attendance as complainant in a public prosecution of that kind would influence to deter, no matter how aggrieved a man might at first feel about the imposition. The loss, he reasons, has been small. 'I've purchased a warning and I won't be caught again.'

"I can give you a very recent instance, without mentioning names, of a case of this kind."

Doctor Jourdan, expressing an interest, the Secretary continued;

"A gentleman rushed into this office one day last month in a white heat of indignant disapproval, having just learned that a professional begging-letter-writer, to whom he had been sending money as a charity, was

a systematic swindler. After concluding his excited recital he demanded of me,

"'Is there no remedy for all this?'

"I was glad to have him put the question so pointedly, and of his own will. He seemed ripe for complaint, and I answered him assuringly,

"'Certainly; there is.'

"'What is it? Where is it? I want to have it enforced at once.'

"I took down this copy of the Laws of 1851, and referred him to the same text that I have just read to you. 'There,' said I, 'is your complete redress. I myself will go with you and show where to make the complaint.'

"'Me! *Me* make the complaint! Can't *you* do it?' and positively, he cast a look backward to assure that his retreat was open, as though I had shown a disposition to pounce onto him.

"'The complaint,' I reasoned in reply, 'ought to be sworn to; and you are present and the proper one to submit a preliminary statement of the facts, as you are the one who has personal knowledge of them.'

"You should have seen— But, I declare! I mentally commiserated the man's lack of spirit, while he proceeded to humiliate himself, uttering evasive excuses.

"It would 'subject him to unpleasant notoriety.' He should 'certainly rely more upon our records in future.' Would be 'forewarned hereafter.' The amount was—'not so much after all!' Concluded that he would 'let the matter pass this time.' '*But if ever*——' etc., etc.

"But I took opportunity to press home on that *man's conscience*, my ideas of his duties to society in *premises*. I drove him from corner to corner of

subterfuging acquittances, until finally he flatly declined to enter complaint. And he went so far as to beg of me not to put the matter in any such shape as might publicly involve him, even as a witness.

"Now that's my disheartened answer to your inquiry, 'Why don't some one make complaint'."

"I wouldn't let slip such a chance!" exclaimed Dr. Jourdan.

"I believe you;" said Mr. Grey. "But you are not likely to have it. You depend too much on us. However, the matter now in hand may indirectly afford you such an opportunity."

"You don't think them likely to leave suddenly?" asked Dr. Jourdan after taking some momorandum notes from the records.

"Oh no! *Not unless alarmed.* There exists no other probable cause of departure that would operate before the close of the month. They are not likely to go even then, from any compulsion on account of rent arrearage; for this man has prospered in villainy there, and he pays his landlord promptly."

"What would you advise?"

"If you think that your suspicions are well grounded, then go quietly to the District Attorney; procure complaint to be made and obtain a warrant under the Statute against both for abduction. Ascertain positively when both are to be found there with the baby, and then make the descent."

"Do you think that I have evidence sufficient now to found complaint and procure a warrant upon?"

To this Mr. Grey replied, "I should say—no; judg*ing from* what you have related. The case has not *been worked* up in detail. You have only a few dis*connected hints* as yet. They are encouraging, but not

certain. Jane may be in rightful possession of some child. Or in wrongful possession, and the child not Mrs. Clifford's. We know nothing positively." Then, very directly addressing his visitor, "But if it should prove to be Mrs. Clifford's child, you will not care to let this man escape?"

The doctor rose. He was almost inclined to take offense. "I would seize him first with my own hands."

The Secretary was considerably surprised at the vehemence of manner attending this declaration. It was fairly an outburst. He did not know as much about Dr. Jourdan's heart bias, and of the beautiful Isabel, and of her agonized waiting, as might have been told him. The young physician made a partial disclosure of the motives which influenced him to so much feeling. He went on,

"No: I want no door of escape left open. He has brought upon as grand a woman as ever became a mother, a woe which is killing her, for——" the doctor's voice halted and trembled as he concluded, "it is slowly breaking her heart."

The Secretary made no reply and Dr. Jourdan continued further, in his arraignment:

"From the accounts which your records give of this man, he is a vile factor for evil of lowest quality. His execrable business is to cheat loving hearts of natural sympathies, leaving poisonous distrust in place thereof. Let us do our best to confound his pestiferous craftiness. Let us move so cautiously that we not only recover the child, but trap his other villainies also."

"Then," counseled Mr. Grey, earnestly seconding the doctor, "you should manœuvre cautiously. If he has a *stolen child* in possession he must be identified as *the principal*, holding it in detention. This is only to

ferential thus far. The affair must be managed by professionals, lest he take alarm meantime and escape. We should get evidence that a jury would be satisfied to convict on.

"I would suggest," the Secretary continued, "that you go this evening and engage the services of skilled detectives. Suppose that they quietly secure the adjoining room Twenty-six, and from there take such observations as will positively connect the accused with the unlawful custody and detention of the child. We will not now consider whose it may be. It is sufficient if you surmise that it has been abducted, and is now constructively in his possession. Will you not thus more certainly compass his conviction? You may secure and hold him answerable for his charity frauds as well. You can, when the time comes, subpœna us with our records. We can supply testimony bearing against him. But, *to secure both objects*, the scrutiny of detectives ought to begin as early as possible. They will know how to dispose of the present occupant in Number Twenty-six. This done, and themselves in possession, they will also know how to see and not be seen. I venture to predict that they will not only get evidence to satisfy a jury upon the charge of abduction, but will also witness the whole programme of Burle's professional deception, and be ready, perhaps, to tell us of elaborations in such depravity, not yet chronicled."

"It shall be done;" empathically declared Dr. Jourdan, rising and taking his hat. "Let us trap him in his frauds and rescue the child as well. And I want you also to help save Jane Stanhope and her boy. She *appears*, from your records, to come of excellent lineage. Let us not leave any part of the good work un-

accomplished. I will improve on your advice and get the best legal counsel that I can obtain to help us in the prosecution of this business. How *much* I wish that we could blot out the hideous traffic! But we'll give it some stunning blows, and if possible, lodge one of its most flagrant practitioners in prison."

And he went immediately about it.

First, to the Central Police Department. The Superintendent, a personal acquaintance, and to whom he desired especially to entrust the matter, was, so the people at the headquarters informed him, absent on a special matter of personal business. He was not expected back before Sunday afternoon.

This was discouraging. Should he lay it before a subordinate? After deliberation he decided that a few hours' waiting would not jeopardize ultimate success. Jip was there on duty, and would inform if anything unusual occurred. He accordingly appointed to meet the Superintendent "at four o'clock the next day: Sunday."

At the hour named he was punctual to his appointment.

Superintendent Van Dorn was ready to enter with hearty interest into any plans for the recovery of little Crissie. He had long been looking for her, and he counseled an open raid *at once*.

This, the doctor judged, would interrupt the plan contemplated for getting evidence against Burle of professional begging. He went on to explain, "If we can have it, without waiting longer than Monday, we want to secure testimony of the habitual swindling that is almost daily practised in that room."

"Then *you* want my men to witness the mode and *manner thereof*?"

"*That's it exactly*;" assented the doctor. "We'

indict him then, both for the abduction and for obtaining charity under false pretenses. I want to wake up the community to the appreciation of a flagrant outrage. Very general attention will be drawn to the case as one of abduction. Now if we can, contemporaneously, procure him to be indicted for the fraudulent getting of charity, and show in this connection what his swindling methods and successes have been, don't you think that the admonitory caution will be fixed in a way that will keep it a long time in the memory of the general public?"

"Very well;" agreed the Superintendent. But his estimation of Burle's *moral* crime lagged considerably behind. He hadn't given that phase of the iniquity much thought. He was ready to spring to the rescue of a stolen child; but the urgency for interruption of a practice, which, in its mischievous results, involved a desecration of the noblest impulses of charitable endeavor, was not appreciated by him—just then.

He stipulated furthermore, "until to-morrow noon."

"I won't delay beyond that time;" he assured Dr. Jourdan. "So far as the child is concerned, I could settle that phase of the case for you very quickly. But you introduce an added complication which contemplates the procuring of testimony as to occurrences in the future. I will take the initial steps to get quiet possession of that adjoining room at once. This will require some preliminary work anyway. But the two men whom I want especially to put in there, because of their better capacity to comprehend and secure what you seem to want, I can't get here before noon to-morrow. They *are now on* their way back from some work they've *been doing* out of the State.

Dr. Jourdan was dissatisfied, but perforce, acquiescent.

"I had hoped to have seen some one in possession of that room to-night, Mr. Van Dorn."

"This is Sunday: Burle won't have any benevolent callers before to-morrow, certainly;" urged the Superintendent; "and you tell me that they have *not been alarmed*. Even if they decamp to-night with the child, (not a thing at all probable,) so far as that risk is concerned, we can follow them. Don't doubt that, Doctor. Surely a few hours in this matter won't make any difference."

But those few hours *did make a difference!*

By the Superintendent's orders, the occupant of the adjoining number Twenty-six was spirited away that afternoon, and an apperture for observation successfully made from the room thus left vacant, through to Twenty-eight. All this was very neatly accomplished, after which the key to Twenty-six was hung at Police Headquarters, awaiting use by the two detectives especially assigned to the case. But, pending their arrival, the room was left empty. And in his reliance upon the doctor that no alarm had been given to Burle, Superintendent Van Dorn saw no necessity for posting any one on the outside.

Delays on their road, returning, kept these men until five o'clock Monday afternoon. At that hour little Crissie was no longer in Island Number Ten! Neither did any of the Superintendent's people afterwards follow her!

None but God, that terrible Monday morning, witnessed the malignant, the demoniacal atrocities that were visited upon poor Jane, when, in sudden alarm, she interposed to save the child. These cruelties only *ended when this pleading* woman sank finally insensible *upon the floor,* under Burle's brutal ferocity.

CHAPTER XXI.

A DAY OF SOLEMN DESTINY.

The Sun rises upon the most eventful Monday of all our calendar.

JOWL kept his Sunday appointments with Burle. He had a sordid interest in so doing. After consultation they decided that one thousand dollars was to be the very lowest sum they would accept from Mr. Harrington.

They had "Looked him over" and "Sized him up"; to use their phraseology. "Three thousand", should be the first demand. They would hold strong for that amount. "Then, if Grandpa can't see us at that figure, why," as Jowl was expressing to Burle, "we have a marginal drop of two thousand before we touch *our* hard pan. But we won't point the negotiations down a bit narrower'n that. He can stand the last squeeze, *and he must.*"

After this conclusion, he struck the table with his large flabby palm and added, "And we won't drop, neither, without fightin' every inch of the way down."

Burle readily agreed to leave the management of this negotiation, as well as any subsequent modifications, to Jowl; and then he ordered—"drinks".

It was Sunday evening, and well along towards midnight. The two sat at a rough deal table in a low *dingy* saloon in New York, situated near Jowl's retreat. *They* very wisely agreed that it was tempting ill luck *to patronize* the bar at Island Number Ten, during the

pending of the present crisis; or even to be seen together about there, or on the streets.

All arrangements for Monday had been secretly perfected in the earlier part of the day, at "The Island," in room Thirty. While there, though securely closeted, they hadn't spoken above a whisper. "The old peddler may be at the key-hole;" Jowl had cautioned.

This was the arrangement for to-morrow:—Jane was first to be dispatched on an errand to some acquaintances, the family of a Master Mason, on Sackett street, in South Brooklyn. She was to go under the belief that Connie would remain to care for the baby.

This first move was planned to take place about half-past three o'clock. After she was well out of the way, (this was suggested by Jowl and agreed to by his companion), Burle was to start up, and affect suddenly to recollect something of importance that would necessitate Connie's going also on an errand somewhere. "But," particularly enjoined Jowl, "it mustn't be very far off, or upon anything that'll keep him more'n ten or fifteen minutes from that baby. For you mark my word, if you try to send him a long ways, he'll suspect something, and like enough nark 'round to balk it. Be sure too, and send him in a direction opposite from Wall Street Ferry.

"You'll probably get him off about fifteen minutes after Jane's gone. That'll be a few minutes before four. I'll be on hand with Slushy in some convenient observin' place, and where I can see him as he leaves the buildin'.

"Immediately he's gone, I want you to be sure and *give the young one* a big dose of that sleepin' stuff

you've got; mind, a '*big*' dose: and I presume I'll appear on deck as you're a' gettin' it down.

"Only one thing more," Jowl went on again hastily, for Burle was about to speak, "and that is—stay sober yourself, and manage cleverly. You ought to keep both Jane and Connie employed in the room durin' the fore part of the afternoon, so's to be ready at the right time for the sendin' off moves we've agreed on. You'll know how to do that without creatin' suspicion. Give 'em some mogul writin' to do, or whatever else comes naturally to hand."

All these preliminaries had previously been discussed early that afternoon, as already related, in Burle's room; and now, pursuant to the appointment made at the conclusion of that sitting, these conspirators had met again here, to review and talk them over, pending their final adoption; also to provide for anything new that might suggest; and finally, to enjoy a "convivial glass" over their anticipated "prospects."

"I tell you Colonel," said Jowl, with a chuckle in every greasy wrinkle of his loose face, "an old buffer who works s'hard as I do of a Sunday, needs a little comfortable relaxation after the 'arjuous guties' of the day." He looked toward the bar. As a call for a waiter, he brought his palm heavily down on the table.

"What'll you have?" he asked now of his companion. One of the attendants was tarrying at his elbow in response to his summons.

Burle had been drinking more than usual.

"I've been going it 'straight' all day, and I won't change at ten o'clock at night;" he replied foggily. *At the same time* he looked about as though in search *of the saloon* clock. He wanted to confirm what had *been his guess* at the hour.

Jowl glanced up at him uneasily. "I'm 'fraid you *oughter* have 'changed' though, some time ago," he solicitously insinuated, if you're so wild as that now on the time. Why, it's nearer *twelve* o'clock!" Burle made no reply. Jowl finally gave the order;

"Well, bring him his whiskey 'straight'; I'll take another beer. Beer gives me satisfaction, without burnin' my insides out."

"Beer's a sloppy slushy swill;" declared Burle, in retaliation for Jowl's disparaging inuendo against whiskey.

"Well, we won't quarrel about our drinks; only—when there's business on hand—ex-*cuse* me on the—*whiskey*. I caution you about to-morrow. It has some mighty ticklish work for us, and you don't want to drop off your level."

"I'll 'tend to—Burle, and you 'tend to—Jowl;" testily admonished the "Colonel" as he swallowed his whiskey.

"And I'm goin' to put Jowl to bed;" announced that individual, tipping the last contents of the beer-glass down his throat.

Burle asked about Slushy.

"Oh, she's comin' 'round, easy like. She's locked in. I slip up every couple of hours and give her a diminished dose. She'll be passable to-morrow mornin'; and quite sensible by the afternoon. But it wouldn't 'a' been wise to have counted on her bein' in condition, a minute earlier'n four o'clock Monday."

Thus they parted for the night.

Three hours later, and after visiting other drinking places, Burle brought up at his favorite resort, and soon *after was absorbed* in a lowest of all low gambling

games, at this kerosene-lit dive on the Bowery, near its lower end.

Here he remained until he had dissipated most of his money, (we should, more correctly, have said, "most of what he had of other people's money,") and then he stumbled up the steps to the sidewalk.

The glow of a lovely placid August morning was coming across the waters from the East. It preluded a day of solemn destiny in our story. A day of intense, rapidly moving, swiftly changing crises. A day, destined in its early hours to visit trials anew upon poor Jane; but showing at its evening, the first cloud-parting of hope, from out which looked a gleaming star, struggling to send its rays through that overhanging blackness which for years had lowered above, hiding all light from her.

It was destined to be a day, brightened with successes and shadowed by discomfitures: a day of influences dominant in alternation, now triumphing in behalf of virtue, and now subordinate to villainy. It was to be a day of quick-moving incident: of vital essayings upon perilous hazard: of rushing rescuing prowess: of hopes raised and of expectations defeated: of redemption and requital: of prayer and of promise: of swift flying succor, and of terrible retributive vengeance.

All this weal, all this whirl, was crowded into the ten hours upon which Burle blinked his inflamed eyes on that eventful Monday morning, when the red eastern flush met him at the sidewalk landing, as he staggered up from that chuck-a-luck basement hole, and shambled out into the advancing light of the rising sun.

He was drunk, but not overcome. He never wholly *succumbed to* whiskey. Much better for him, as well *as for others*, had it totally disabled him on this of all

other mornings! But it stimulated a more reckless strength along his muscles, and it lessened his cowardly cautiousness.

He began to think of getting back to Number Thirty, and of sleeping off the effects of his debauch. He hazily reflected that he could rest, certainly until three o'clock, and then have sufficient arranging time for the doing of all that was proposed.

But he was troubled with a doubtful uncertainty: "If, when I wake up, the woman should be gone!

"But she shan't be gone; for I'll make her stay to wake me up.

"But Connie! What 'bout him?

"I can tell her that he's not t' go out.

"Then p'rhaps she or Connie'll suspect something. And if they begin to s-s-suspect, (hell take 'em!) I mightn't be able to—shunt 'em off."

All this time he was moving along unsteadily. He continued his cogitations:

"The whole thing's so simple, if—if—" and he made new effort to collect and command his mind.

"I s'pose," he soliloquized, without any particular motive, or any reason for such a direction of thought, "that a clock wouldn't run a minute '*if*' something tumbled in t' stop the ticks."

"'If.' Always 'IF.' D—n the 'Ifs' say I;" he finally ejaculated angrily.

But he gaped sleepily and kept stumbling along. He tried to moisten his lips but his mouth was parched. "I've drank so much I'm dry."

"'If like cures like,'" he further considered, "then I mus' have s' more whiskey." Accordingly, at the next corner, *he* steered himself cautiously into one of

the "all-night" places there presenting, and he ordered his dose. But it wasn't a homœopathic one!

Jowl's villainy was longer headed. He had gone to bed at twelve, and would wake, well refreshed and prepared, with a clear head, to carry out his part of the day's scheme. Could he have seen Burle at this moment, he would have summed him up a demented fuddled fool; and the day's projects would have been deferred. However they were destined to go on; notwithstanding the progress threatened to be after a zigzag fashion. It is after such form that matters, whiskey-laden, usually do proceed. And thus the method now. As the day advanced, developements grew more and more tortuous; yet out of the tangle, God shaped His purposes: and they were wise.

Burle reached home about nine o'clock. He was hungry; feverish from his carouse; uneasy concerning the day's proposals; irritable: and when his breakfast was not forthcoming with that impossible dispatch which a half drunken man unreasonably expects, he grew savage with all other of his irascible humors.

"You miserable slug;" was his brutal address to Jane who was doing her utmost to prepare his meal, "am I to wait all day for my breakfast?"

"Be patient, please, Cluff. I'm hurrying as fast as I can."

"Then hurry faster;" he peremptorily ordered with his usual unreasonableness.

As she did not reply he took further offence at her silence. Had she tried to answer him, however amicably or forbearingly, then his umbrage would have been *just* the same because she hadn't——"held her tongue."

Realizing his quarrelsome disposition she grew timor*ously* nervous, and in her trembling haste she put too

much pepper into this, too little salt in that: at least so he growlingly complained after seating himself and commencing to partake of the food.

"Where's Con?" he suddenly demanded, with a wandering idea of some preparation for his part of the day's performance.

She replied, "Connie is in your room, taking care of the baby."

"I want him;" was his next mandate.

Connie, who had overheard the inquiry, now presented himself. Then Burle forgot why he had sent for him. He only looked about with an obscure idea of—something. However, he soon utilized the attendance.

"Take this quarter," he directed snappishly, handing him a piece of money, "and that bottle," he next continued, pointing to one on the mantel shelf, "and go and get me some whiskey."

"Don't Cluff;" urged Jane gently. She knew, of course, that he had already been drinking heavily.

He looked at her. A scowl deepened across his brows. With a laborious gathering of purpose, which inclined to waver, he finally fixed his drunken regard; and then he swore angrily at her because of the "p'sumpt'us 't'ference;" concluding his profanity by consigning her to a place for which he was certainly appointed himself. Perhaps he realized this, and hoped to continue her horrible bondage there!

After breakfast he grew less abrupt; not quite so savage; but yet he was dangerous. Connie having returned with the liquor, he proceeded to help himself liberally to it. Then he lighted his pipe, sat himself down in *the big arm* chair: and finally—he fell asleep.

Jane and Connie moved about cautiously, and ver

"O CLUFF, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?" (Page 97.)

likely Jowl's plans would all have carried safely through in good time, had not their principal object at this juncture interrupted.

The baby in the next room began to cry. Connie darted through the way of communication, and quickly closed it after him. But not soon enough. The child's pitiful wail, feeble though it had been, awakened Burle.

He got up. He said nothing; but he ominously compressed his lips and looked about him as though seeking something. Jane watched his eyes with a fearful boding. His search finally fixed upon a heavy flat ruler, and stepping forward he snatched it up. Then with a muttered curse he started for the other room.

"O Cluff," Jane now besought tremblingly; "what *are* you going to do?"

"You get out o' the way, or I'll brain you." She had intercepted his passage to the baby.

"Then do so; but oh, don't strike that poor little creature—Cluff! How much have we already to answer for! Cluff,—Cluff,—Don't add another cruelty——"

She spoke rapidly and earnestly, all the time opposing his progress to the next room.

"*Will* you get out o' the way?"

She had caught the arm which held the weapon, continuing earnestly to plead for Crissie.

But his strength was fast overcoming her efforts to hold him back. He might strike her insensible at any moment. In her desperate perplexity she called loudly *to her little* boy,

"*Connie!* CONNIE!! Run—with her—to the attic."

The suggestion was quickly taken. The lock of the

door leading from Thirty into the hall, clicked behind the fleeing boy just as Burle was in the act of throwing Jane violently from him.

He whirled her away, and thus relieved sprang quickly through the opening to the other side of that huge mask. But Connie was already disappearing down the hall with the baby, in his terrified flight to the garret of refuge.

Thus baffled, and now thoroughly awakened and newly enraged, he returned—to settle with Jane.

She was cowering away from him in the farthermost corner of the room.

Oh, why did she not fly also——in time; with Connie; and before the brute returned!

Such was not God's purpose. We can find no other answer. A short-sighted adjuster of incident in this world, would certainly so have ordered; for thus might she have averted Burle's flaming resentment.

But had she done so, then that morning of hope which was so near the ushering in of reclamation for her, might have been put back into blind obscurity. Again would she have accepted new confirmation in an infamous partnership; one which, during the cloudy past, so long and so pitilessly had held her. But now the final wave of torturing struggle is angrily cresting over. Her eyes look up in horror at it. She stretches unavailing arms to ward it from her. She even shrieks in her terrified dismay; but it overwhelms her.

Nevertheless it was the impulse that flung the exhausted creature upon the high shore of rescue. There gentle compassionate hands lifted tenderly the broken insensible form, and loving endeavor nursed it *back to life and hope*. And the same sweet charity *leading, the same* white hand guiding, the tired son

safely reached at last the haven and protection of a pure home. And ere the end, with a realization of sins forgiven, the tear-blurred eyes were raised toward heaven.

Verily, God doeth all things well!

We close the door upon the scene of brutish ferocity that followed? Since help was not to be, let us shut away the harrowing detail of occurrence. We know already something of what this unfortunate woman has endured at Burle's hands. The last ordeal was terrible in comparison. That he did not kill her outright in his insane fury, might be attributed rather to the fortune of incident, than to any lack of infernal purpose.

Island Number Ten was occupied by a class of proscribed, pitless flint-hearts. By the law of common consent among them, no interference was intruded upon a neighbor's affairs. Brawls and ragings were indeed of so common occurrence, that this hardened community had ceased to notice them. But upon that morning of peril so fearful to the defenceless woman in Twenty-eight, there *were* found, even in that den of callous natures, some who listened uneasily to the shrieks which rang from the fourth floor.

These people finally gathered in the halls. They cursed the brute who prolonged the misery of his victim.

"Why don't the bloke kill her at once?" they angrily debated. A movement was already making toward Twenty-eight, when the struggle, the blows, and the cries, ceased. And now no longer the desperate lamentations and the wails for help. They die into *smothered* moans: and these finally, quiveringly gasp *themselves* into a far-away, shuddering, horror-hinting *silence*.

Soon Burle's sullen bloated face appeared at the door. It looked out with a black menace. The hall was free. All was still. He stepped forth, closed the door behind him, slunk along the passage, and passed down the stairs.

He has gone.

Next into the affrighted silence came Connie: and hugged tight to his breast, he held the unconscious little weakling. He crouched along noiselessly and with fluttering heart beats, venturing his way with many forebodings as he crept along the shadows of the hall.

He tried the door of Twenty-eight and entered. Entered as he had done before, to weep and to work over the insensible form of his mother. Beaten to the floor: broken: then left to recover however she might, or die in her evil plight.

We know how his gentle offices have in times before been administered. We know how his pale scared face has bent over his mother: how his anxious ear has been placed to know if the heart still struggled on: what loving endeavors have been exercised in interposition to arrest and turn the faltering balance back.

And thus does he minister again.

Almost an hour has he been occupied in these tender attentions, and once more she has wavered back to life. And now, slowly opening her bleared mutilated eyes, she has for the second time, with hesitating articulation, asked that question,

"Will you take me,—Connie,—to the beautiful lady, —*your* beautiful lady, of the Sunday-school?"

We may remember that a half-formed resolution *impulsed her to make* such a request once before, and upon *like ghastly* occasion. But this time there was

desperate resolve of dying desire conveyed in the asking. And the set determination in those ravaged eyes betokened that at last there was to be one final mightful effort for her own and the child's deliverance from the frightful body of that death which weighed upon them both.

CHAPTER XXII.

RECLAMATION.

Jane hazards a dash for liberty.

CONNIE could not answer at once: but he took his mother's hand and held it fast. His eyes filled, and lifting them, he thanked The Great All-Helper, of whom the beautiful lady had taught him.

"Oh yes;" he eagerly assented. "If we could only go this minute!"

His mother's lips were tremulous. She made brave effort to steady them. Nervous quiverings throbbed painfully in her face.

"We can!" she declared with energy.

Connie was overjoyed. "If it only *could* be!" he said: "And now!" Then she spoke again:

"We *will* go, this very day, though I crawl there upon my knees. But would she see me? I am a sorry —sorry—sight—my dear."

The concluding term of endearment, and she in her extreme condition, went to the lad's heart. He choked back a sob.

Again she essayed, "But I'm sure that so kind a *lady* would——"

It was impossible for her to articulate any further.

However, recovering herself, with another effort she implored with revived desperation,

"Oh take me to her Connie; *now*—before it is too late!"

"The baby, dear mamma;" reminded Connie.

True enough! She had not thought! Her head fell.

"Why not take baby with us?" tremblingly suggested Connie.

She raised her face, terrified. "Oh no! I dare'n't do that. He would kill me; and," she continued, as though seeking excuse for omitting half the duty, but asking too for guidance, "ought we to trouble the lady with the baby?"

If she could but have known!

However she did not know. She reasoned that, the baby carried there and its story told, Mrs. Clifford might feel bound to assume a burdensome duty with respect to its charge and the finding of its parents.

Bear with her. For years she has been under the cloud of evil. For years corrupt assortings have dominated her life. Bear with her patiently.

God bears with her. God is merciful. This moment He is influencing in the direction where lies ultimate safety for drooping little Crissie; reclamation too, for her compelled unwilling abductress.

God is merciful. He at this moment is shaping events, the ordering whereof shall lighten Jane Stanhope's burden of misery, and guide her to the glad realization of sins forgiven.

God is merciful. His hand, at this momont, is shaping a progress of incident that shall bring a very tumult of glad joy to another bosom, benumbed now *with a cold gloom of* distressful waiting.

God is just. While His hand is stretched to save Jane Stanhope from further unwilling slavery to sin; while His mercy shall recover Connie from harm now impending; while His goodness will not permit Isabel Clifford to suffer longer with heart strings bleeding; neither will he forget to bring retributive confusion upon the infamous occasioner of this cumulated woe. His mercy, His goodness, His justice; they shall endure forever!

In this perplexing strait, Connie meditated anxiously in an effort to devise a temporary disposition of the little baby.

There was a way. He knew it. Jane also knew it; but they both avoided its mention. Too often already had it been practiced on this drooping innocent! And now, as a result toward which it had helped:—fast failing health; glimmering eyes that no longer sparkled up into yours; they seemed waveringly to plead instead; white sunken cheeks; a chalky pallor and nerveless limbs: all these were accusing witnesses which brought arraigning denunciation to Jane Stanhope's inculpating conscience.

No! She will never again have recourse to *that* way! Therefore both tacitly avoid its mention: and all the while Connie flushes in zealous study to hit upon some felicitous expedient. Finally:—

"Why not go alone, mamma, and leave me to care for baby?"

Some good angel pleaded for compliance with this suggestion! Reason, too, joined and urged, "You will have much to say that is not for Connie's ears. You can return, and with help save both the boy and the *child.*"

Spirits of evil also intruded to contest with these

better impulses; until she was distracted and moaned to herself; "What shall I do! What shall I do!"

Finally, with a sudden and desperate impetuosity—even with *fierce* resolve—she sprang forward. Kneeling upright and supplicating upward with face, with lifted hands tightly locked, she pronounced, "God Almighty help me; I will go!"

She immediately set about determinedly in preparation. Very little more was said between them; only she came often, took Connie's face in her hands and kissed his forehead. She seemed impulsed to do this, whenever some demon, importunate in disputing argument, was like for the moment to shake her purpose.

Connie felt uneasy, standing idly by and doing nothing. He must, somehow, occupy himself and relieve the oppressive tension of that calm, now settled upon the room. He wanted to help her actively, but just then was timid about intruding even his voice, upon his mother. Some nameless influence forbade the breaking of that silence.

Bethinking of the baby he glided through the secret way of communication to Burle's room. Returning he brought back little Crissie. She was sleeping. Her once-so-full red lips were now colorless and shrunken. They receded unnaturally, partially revealing two little teeth, scarcely whiter than the lips. Though asleep, the eyelids did not meet. An exposed line of white told a pitiful tale of weakening vitality. The little hands fell down nerveless; and where the clothing disclosed, the limbs had grown thin.

Connie sat down with the little one in his arms. His object in getting the child had been to break in upon the distressful *manner* of embarrassment that, to his *mind, weighed upon* them both. He wanted to talk to his

mother; but the solemnity of conditions so suddenly arrived, kept him timorously silent. He thought that baby's presence might in some way lighten all this and restore easy unrestrained companionship.

But he had not understood his mother. Far deeper influences were at work in her breast. She was not, with him, shy or reticent in a hesitating or embarrassed sense. But she was, in that hour, staggering agonized under a load of nervous agitation. She was at a pitch where she felt that if she spoke she should cry aloud in anguish.

Judge then how the sight of that baby's pallid face tore her heart anew. She approached, trembling violently. She paused and knelt before the child. She took one little drooping hand. She pressed it to her eyes; to her bloody lips; and dabbles of red marked the places of contact. A blinding burst of tears came upon the hand, and with them she washed away the scarlet stain. Her breast heaved—sobbed—and her whole body shook with new remorse.

"Will its mother ever forgive me?" she finally asked with pitiful pathos of entreaty, looking into the baby's face. Then lifting her eyes, "Will God forgive me?"

Again she rose and continued her preparation, silently. In a few minutes she approached again, and this time she kissed Connie. Her lips were cruelly bruised. They were blackened and bleeding. The blows where fallen upon face and neck had left ugly souvenirs of the quality of Burle's regard. She was in no fit condition either mentally or physically to go upon such an errand: indeed to go at all. But the cry *of her* soul was, "Now! O my God: Now! If I *delay* again, it will be too late."

Only such travail of spirit could deliver her resolve. If she delayed, hoping for more favoring conditions, she might die ere she could seize on the mercy which glimmeringly promised to-day. Therefore her heart and soul cried—"NOW!"

Being ready to depart, once more she knelt before the child. Its little bare feet were exposed. She gathered them in her hands and pressed them to her breast. Her eyes closed and her lips moved silently. Then she rose, and after embracing Connie, dropped a doubled veil closely over her disfigured face—and was gone.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ISABEL'S BESTOWAL OF HERSELF.

HALF an hour thereafter she stood in the great hall of Crandall Harrington's magnificent residence. Lunch had been served; finished; and Isabel, on her way back to her now-so-lonely rooms, her hand upon the great newel post at the foot of the ascent, paused to note the unexpected visitor.

A servant stood holding the open door behind the stranger, and Jane, having entered, in fluttering uncertain way was waiting irresolute, just within the vestibule.

"Are you— Is this Mrs. Clifford?"

Isabel advanced from her position. Approaching nearer to the veiled figure, she answered simply, "Yes?"

The tone was one of graciousness; and the mien, together with a gentle rising inflection seemed to invite, "*Can I do anything* for you?"

An involuntary sigh went from Jane's breast. For an instant, and with a quick throb, her memory had gone back to early associations. They were thus reminded by the courteous saluting air and the amiable high-bred presence of the noble woman before her. Then, in another instant the sigh was a sob, as though again she was falling, falling back into those depths which for so long a time had compassed her. But quickly again came the present; and with it, realization. And with this reality, many tremors and misgivings, since now the moment had indeed come, and she must declare herself. An outcast from past peaceful and favored environment: an abandoned woman: a corrupt accomplice: living unholily with the partner of her guilt: participating and seconding in low schemes of fraud and petty deceits for predal gain. Self accused! Self condemned!

And to *that* end was she *here?* Why should she approach this beautiful stranger as her confessor? What interest, so far aloof from her, could such a radiant-eyed being have in woeful tales of evil doings, with repentant wishings at the end!

"She was a woman!"

Aye; but women are more inexorable with women, than Priest, King, or God!

Jane was indeed whirling in uncertainty, and she would have turned to escape. But she looked again—once more—into that face. If face and mien of angel on earth ever waited, the waiting was before her. She saw it. She took heart. She remembered Connie's loving legends of this teacher. Oh, she must have *help!* Her desperate soul reached out, cried out for it. *She tremblingly* ventured again:

"Are you the beau—the teacher—the Sunday-school teacher of my—of Connie Stanhope?"

Again the encouraging "Yes;" and with it now, a nearer approach and a warmth of interest added.

"I—I am—his mother."

Jane's agitation was now so apparent that Mrs. Clifford, anticipating rightly that she came on some urgent errand, without any formal bearing though with graceful inbred heart-gentility, asked her to a seat, herself leading the way into the large parlor to the left of the entrance.

Then, as though intuitively divining some heart trouble, and with a wish to avoid the sombre gloom which shaded the room; reflecting too upon the liability of interruption there, she reconsidered, and proposed instead,

"Come with me to *my* parlor—up-stairs. It is more cheery there."

Mrs. Clifford again led the way: up the broad flight: along the upper corridor; and finally into her own sunny room. Here, seated at invitation opposite the gentle Isabel who delicately waited, Jane could no longer delay the moment she had sought, yet dreaded.

She lifted her veil.

"Oh—Heart of Hearts!" and Isabel raised her face and hands as though invoking the protest of Heaven. Then quickly returning to the piteous object before her,

"My poor woman! Who has done you this terrible harm?"

"It is nothing. It is nothing—that you see;" answered Jane. "Oh, if you could only help me to forgiveness *for hideous harm* a thousand times worse, that *you don't see!*"

"But, you poor creature!" Isabel exclaimed in remonstrance; "It *is* something. And oh, how cruel! How cruel!"

By this time she was bending over the woman, untying; unpinning; and removing hat and wraps. The words accompanying, their tones, and the acts as well, all so generously full of sympathy; they called a burst of tears, and Jane, for the moment could not articulate.

"And now your gloves;" insisted Isabel as she gently drew them also from the weeping unresisting Jane.

Just as she was moving away to deposit these attirings, the beautiful glossy hair, uncovered, attracted her; and as though she could not resist the sympathetic impulse, she passed her hand softly over it.

This was too much for Jane; and with a sob she exclaimed,

"Oh don't! Don't touch me! You will only shrink the more when I tell you——"

"Ah well!" sighed Isabel. "I know that you are a sad woman—for some cause;" and tears stood in her own eyes as they dwelt upon the miserable object before her, "and I want to help you."

"And you will, you truly will?" implored Jane.

"I want to, certainly;" replied Isabel: and she drew her chair and sat down nearer.

"And if, when you know that I am very—very wicked; will you still want to help me?" pleaded Jane; as though to win a stipulating promise in advance.

"Yes;" answered Isabel, "I am sure that I shall still want to help you, even if you have been 'very—*very*' wicked; for then, will you not need my help all

the more? But I feel sure that you have repented now, and that you wish to be wicked no longer."

Her great soft eyes dwelt forgivingly upon the face, so anxiously wishful upon her reply.

"Even if I had abandoned my home?" began Jane, going very, very far back.

"Yes."

"Abandoned my baby?" she next ventured.

Isabel looked up with a tremulous gasp. "*Her baby!* And O God, where is mine!"

This was like the sudden recalling of a great sob, that had weighed heart out of life. It was too much for Isabel's self control. She covered her face. Her chin quivered and hot tears forced through her fingers.

Jane in her turn was alarmed. She came nearer and sank on her knees before the still figure with its white hands pressed up so hard.

"Forgive me. Perhaps——Surely I didn't know;" she began uncertainly; not understanding the cause of Isabel's sudden agitation. Then, in mind, reverting to the evoking question she added eagerly, "But I know you will forgive *that*, when I tell you how it was; and that I put him away in a safer place for his own good."

Isabel dropped her hands. Becoming aware now, how close the kneeling figure had pressed up before her, she reached forward and rested them on Jane's shoulders, and in doing so, expressed sadly and soberly,

"Surely you could not know that this question would so distress me. Yes: God would forgive you; when, as you say, it was for the child's best good."

"And for leading a bad life afterwards?"

Sorrowfully:—"Yes, if now you sincerely repent."

"*And for stealing*; or what is quite as wicked?" *pleaded Jane.*

"He forgave the thief on the cross;" Isabel answered solemnly.

"And oh, for something that seems to me the worst of all," yet implored Jane, still on her knees, and creeping a little closer; the wan white face of baby Crissie presenting to her memory: "something that I dare not, —How can I tell it?"

Isabel recited reverently in answer,

"'I have blotted out, as a thick
'cloud, thy transgressions, and as a
'cloud, thy sin; return unto me;
'for I have redeemed thee.'"

"Does God say that?" asked Jane lifting her inflamed eyes, her bleeding quivering lips, her beaten broken face.

"Oh, indeed He does;" assured Isabel; and leaning forward, she placed her hands, one upon the other, on the bowed head of the repentant woman before her; she lifted her face, her soul, and repeated yet another promise,

"'Though thy sins be as scarlet,
'they shall be as white as snow;
'though they be red like crimson,
'they shall be as wool.'"

"And these too? Are these also *His* words?" eagerly sought the contrite woman.

"And 'these too' are 'His words;'" assured Isabel. Like God's angel she was; sent with His promises to this erring soul.

"Then God is good. I have never known it before:" and Jane, with a deep sigh clasped her hands upon her face, and her lips moved in a more hopeful *petition* than had ever before ascended from them to *her loving* Saviour.

Presently she raised her face again. Nearer and nearer she had crept in the utterance of these beseeching sentences, until she crouched close by Isabel's side. Then she reached with imploring motion and lightly touched Isabel's hand. There was a distressful pathos of supplication in the act; as though in the slough of her misery, the faintest contiguity with this God-sent mediating presence, was a sustaining saving inherence.

How far indeed was she from anticipating the response of the noble woman to whom she appealed! She was trying to carry this hand to her swollen lips, when Isabel, with large hearted reciprocation, took the tremulous fingers into her own strong clasp.

The contrite creature, with flushed humility looked up into the gentle eyes that were now regarding her, so full of compassionate leniency! She thrilled under the clinging contact of this forgiving hand: this heaven-sent hand of reprieve: this hand of condonation, held out by a princess; peerless in the most winsome, the most womanly attributes of gracious charity.

And such a spotless woman *could* take such a hand, grimed though it had been, in the pool of vile consortings; *could* devote looks without reproachings to a face scarred with sin; *could* dwell with kindliness upon the outlines of a form given up for so many years to recreant practices; *could* bestow herself to save such an one: all this could the noble Isabel do, and herself remain none the less pure.

She was saying within herself; "Shall I forejudge where Christ has compassionated and forgiven? Nay, truly!

"I *see before me* a penitent sister. She is lifting her *sorrowful eyes to* mine with shrinking entreaty. Those

eyes tell me that she is sincere in her contrition: they tell me that she would clasp Christ's feet and unceasingly importune for His help and absolution. Christ would give both. Then God forbid that I, a human earthly sister, liable under like environments to fall into like calamity, should turn coldly away from beseeching such as this! I would even put my lips to her poor hurt face as an earnest of my endeavor in her behalf: for are we not both clay; and a few years from now who shall distinguish our dust? A few more years from now and we shall both stand, side by side, before that loving Saviour who, so many years ago, tenderly raised a like one, putting His own precious hand on her head, saying, 'Neither do I condemn thee'."

She ceased these inward reflections, and bent forward, as she had purposed within herself, to give the condoning pledge.

But the climax of feeling had been too great: and ere her lips could touch the bruised forehead, an overwrought nature tottered unsteadily. Isabel stretched her hands quickly to give support, and poor Jane fainted in her arms.

The superb form of the splendid creature, graceful, supple, strong, was bending over the quiet, deathlike face of the helpless sufferer. One indeterminate moment, as though undecided whether or not to ring for help; and then, quickly concluding in her mind, she pronounced, "no;" very emphatically.

Addressing now to the insensible woman, she first raised her head tenderly upon her left arm. Then *exerting* her grand strength, she lifted the insentient Jane *as softly*, and carried her as easily, as though the *drooping* weight had been but a child's. Swiftly she

passed from the room, out through the hall, and approaching she laid the burden upon her own bed, in her own chamber adjoining.

While busy applying restoratives, Isabel had time more particularly to note the unsightly bruises that marred the pallid face. They were upon her neck too; and they extended down, she dared not conjecture how far, beneath the apparrel which hid them. They had deepened now into black witnesses, standing forth in testimony—of what?

Isabel did not yet know; but her tears fell when her hands touched them. She conned over many suppositive probabilities as she silently ministered to the stricken woman. In all of them she seemed wishing to find mitigating excuses for the faults which Jane, as yet, had barely outlined.

Her thoughts, still running on:—"She must have been a very lovely girl! It certainly is the face of a beautiful woman, even now. I can see it thus through all these disfiguring marks: and it bears too, underneath the whole, the epigraph of cultured and refined antecedents. What horrors the poor soul must have passed through! Ah me! What contrariety of fate is it, that brings blight here, blessings there! Wealth to one, poverty to a neighbor! Love to me, curses to her! And are we not all made in the same image, and by the same Creator? Yes: He is our Common Father. Then are not His children sisters and brothers!"

Continuing still her soliloquy:—

"But so it is. Crime with Cain: blessings to his brother! Hate and perhaps hell the portion of one: *heaven for the other!*"

Then bending again over her charge she pleaded

"Please God to save this one. Surely it is Thy resolve, for hast Thou not sent her to me for help? Guide me then, and give direction to my purpose Thou Tender Christ, that with my whole heart I may incline to adopt Thy trust."

Her face was raised and she besought with clasped hands. It was then, as the whispered prayer was speeding upwards, that Jane, opening her eyes, half consciously regarded this noble woman. She thought that an angel was lingering above her there.

And there was: an angel bringing balm for the wounds of the body; a fair messenger who would whisper the assurance of God's forgiveness into the anxious bosom of that soul. An angel of mercy, abundant in charitable grace; not judging harshly: one sweetly compassionate in forbearance for the faults of an unfortunate.

"Let me raise your head;" and she gently pushed her way under Jane's shoulders. The firm white arm of purity, locked around the hot feverish neck of the Magdalen. Then she lifted her into a sitting posture: she placed pillows for support behind her.

Jane submitted passively, with bliss bewildering.

Not satisfied yet, and as though no offering less than herself complete, would quite content her, Isabel next climbed upon the bed; and, that it might have tenderer support, she drew the ever wondering woman's head back upon her shoulder; her cool breath fanned softly the burning forehead. Then, apparently satisfied, she waited silently.

Finally, Jane spoke with difficulty and hesitation, "How dare I tell you; how dare I burden such heavenly goodness with my bad story? But oh, if only I

might! It would lighten the load that is crushing me. May I speak?"

"You poor soul," remonstrated Isabel; "only a few moments ago, you fainted!"

Notwithstanding that might be, Jane was tremulously eager to pour out her heart to the sweet friend she had found, and her face showed troubled disappointment at the implied objection. Isabel interpreted the look and quickly proposed a compromise: "If you will lie down and sleep until three o'clock, then you shall tell me,—all."

"All! All!"

Jane repeated the word with shuddering protest. But it was also an exclamation of forbearance for Isabel's sake. No: ears as pure as were Connie's beautiful lady's, must never hear—*all!*

"As much then as you will;" substituted Isabel, again reading her thoughts.

"But what if I could not sleep?" feebly opposed Jane.

"Then I will help you;" was cheerily answered: and getting down from her position, Isabel promptly set about doing so.

She brought and held to Jane's lips a mixture, and the weak creature drank it obediently. "Now, at three," promised Isabel, "I will wake you."

The tired woman sank back. Indeed she was exhausted to the last degree. Under the influence of the opiate she was soon in deep slumber.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JIP'S STARTLING REPORT.

STILL pursuing the eventful developments of this momentous Monday, we go back an hour and find Jip on duty at Island Number Ten.

He beheld Jane Stanhope leave room Twenty-eight and pass rapidly down the stairs. A thick veil hid her face: a heavy shawl enveloped her person.

Jip was alarmed. Direful sounds from Twenty-eight had terrified him while skulking about the halls during the early morning hours.

Then had occurred the protesting conclave of the mob, their muttered expostulations, and finally their movement as by common consent toward the locality of the disturbance. Then there was a cessation of the cries, and the angry people dispersed.

After this, he secretly noted Burle's appearance; and then his disappearance down the square stairway.

Jip was puzzled; very much puzzled. One hour before, he had seen this man go into Thirty. He recalled that there was no apparent door of communication from Thirty to Twenty-eight. He had kept strict watch; and behold! this same man now issues from *Twenty-eight*. How did he get there! This circumstance he coupled with the former mysterious disappearance of the little baby from Twenty-eight, when *he had knocked* for admittance there upon the occasion *of his subterfuging* "rag" errand, on the Friday previous. *Was it not probable* then, that the baby was put

out through some way which this man had evidently utilized to let himself in? Mysteries thickened!

Jip had hurried off after this surly looking bloat-face. He followed him only far enough to assure that he had no baby concealed about him.

Then he hastily returned in time to note next:—Connie's cautious appearance upon this rapid scene-shifting stage. *His* bearing was also that of suspicious watchfulness. He crouched along the hall to Twenty-eight. He concealed something in his arms. He stooped at the key hole. Then *he* suddenly disappeared within.

Certainly a perplexing puzzle hung about this remarkable number Twenty Eight!

Wonders increased; for next, after an hour and a half of perfect quiet, a muffled silent woman stole from this same room. A thick veil hid her face. A heavy shawl enveloped her person. She darted away.

Jip was in a quandery. He didn't like to leave his post; but that shawl *might* cover a baby! Had they taken alarm? And was this woman hurrying to a new place of hiding with Crissie?

He determined to follow her. He did follow her.

Most astounding of all! He beheld her ring the front-door bell at Mr. Harrington's residence!

She was admitted. Not only that but she conversed with Mrs. Clifford. This he could observe through the open door. Then they went into the parlor. Next; they passed together up the stairs.

He waited some time longer; but now absolute quiet seemed to have settled upon the surface of things anomalous. For the present there were no more disturbing ripples. Those already noted had widened so far, that they reached beyond both his sight and sense

and Jip, staggered now to the last degree, and arrived at the final stage of helplessness, hurried off to submit this muddle of inexplicability to Dr. Jourdan.

He found the physician at home, closeted with a detective of the regular force. He soon obtained an audience, and then he excitedly related, and Dr. Jourdan heard with about as much perturbation, the story of Jane's sudden visit to Mr. Harrington's house.

Here was an added complication, and it startled the doctor. He could not, upon the moment, calculate upon its bearing and relation, but he made up his mind to get to Mr. Harrington's house as soon as possible.

Notwithstanding this unexpected development, which indeed was a complexity difficult to understand, the young physician was able to reassure Jip; and he confided to him the projected occupancy of Number Twenty-six, by the two expert detectives. In conclusion, he electrified him with the intelligence that they had warrant for the belief that it was indeed little Crissie whom these people had in detention.

The seizure was to be made in due time. Meanwhile, some preliminaries, having for their object the better fixing of the crime upon Burle, were in abeyance. Pending their arrangement, and until everything was in readiness, Dr. Jourdan enjoined upon Jip, that Mrs. Clifford was to receive no information. Further, that it was his (Dr. Jourdan's) purpose, when the proper time came, to repair to Mr. Harrington's, break the intelligence as discreetly as possible, and then perhaps take the mother with him to receive her child.

All this the doctor communicated willingly but hurriedly, feeling that Jip had earned a right to share the knowledge. His surveillance in the past had been very faithful; and so useful, withal, that its continuance

had been encouraged uninterrupted, notwithstanding the admission of regular officials into the secret of this later discovery. It appeared to be a valuable adjunctive agency which might develop some new service. Dr. Jourdan, in concluding this joyful communication, once more enjoined care about premature divulgences. Finally dismissing Jip, he returned and sent off also the detective; and then he himself, as quickly as possible, hurried to Mr. Harrington's house.

Jip was ecstatic. He was in a realm of exuberant anticipation. In a few hours perhaps, Crissie would be back again! He couldn't resist the temptation that *did* so beset, and he must yield to just one little corner of a dangerous gratification.

He flew around to the stable. He found Dennis and besought him excitedly to go into the house and send out Letty.

The good man undertook the mission. He surreptitiously interviewed the maid, gave her the message, with a wink stable-ward, and then, to cover her departure, busied himself in carrying out the pretended purpose of his errand to the kitchen.

Not waiting for Dennis, who was yet pothering ostentatiously at the kitchen sink, the girl slipped away and hurried to the stable. There she encountered Jip, who, in his stocking feet, in the middle of the barn floor, was executing the most riotous kind of a general fling-around. His hat was cutting ares the maddest: his red hair stood out in points the most electric: he was in a paroxysm of impetuous effervescence. In short, his organism was that of an eruptive Flatbush lunatic.

"*We've dropped!* We've dropped! We've

dropped!" he was shouting; if it can be said that one shouts in a husky whisper.

A whooping vociferation showed in his face, in every part and member of his body. The wild exuberant shout was in all particulars genuine, save in this, that no vocal issuance above a hoarse stifle accompanied it.

He partially suspended his turbulent gavot at sight of Letty. Approaching her, with tears dancing in his eyes and excited tremblings in every limb, he exclaimed under his breath,

"By golly! We've twigged their 'shady.' We've holed the old cadgers! *Whoop!* Tra la la!"

Then skipping away and turning his attention to the atmosphere about him, he gyrated and apostrophized in most bewildering passes at imaginary combatants.

"Come off, I tell yer! What yer givin' us? Take that!"

"I tho't it ud paralyze yer;" he exulted, bringing up once more in front of the astonished girl. "Give us a bouncin' 'B' on it." (The "B" in Jip's nomenclature standing for "Buss"; which in polite parlance is interpreted—a kiss.)

Letty gave him one with energy, square on the lips, throwing her arms around his neck to bind her congratulations. She tried to hold on to him for a minute. The tears were overflowing her own eyes; and though she was able only to understand that some amazing good fortune had befallen as connected with Crissie, she did not yet gather what it was, and she asked almost breathlessly,

"Does Mistress know of it?"

"*Great* Scott!" ejaculated the crazy fellow, jumping at a conclusion; "Has Dennis gone and blurted that

to her?" and he hastily disengaged himself and darted out at the door.

While in frantic progress toward the kitchen, and in full career just as he was turning the corner of the stable, Jip suddenly overwhelmed poor Dennis, at that moment returning; and upon the instant there was an explosive jumble of two bodies in a violent concussion of opposing inertia; a ludicrous confused tangle of two heads, eight legs and arms, and two pails of hot water.

However, this misadventure was righted, excused, and then Jip explained that, "Ther 'Pill-masher' didn't want anybody at the house ter know it—yet."

"Know what?"

Jip was too excited for any very coherent lucidity. He was trying to tell them that Crissie was found, but that for a few hours "*no one must know it*," when Letty interrupted,

"Why, but you've told *us*!" indicating the coachman and herself.

"Well! can't 'us' keep it?" Jip enforced with excited imperativeness.

"Of course!"

After this the auditory two thirds of this interested trio begged for further particulars.

Perhaps if Jip could have been taken priorly into some open lot, and there uncorked, (metaphorically speaking,) his pent in turmoil of explosives, unobstructedly escaping, would have left him reasonably settled. But where he was he dared not yell above a whisper; and his strait was pitiful. He was full of "yell," and must hold it in.

He was like a bottle with the cork barely started, *which must sizzle* and sputter its accumulated effervescence *through small* aperture; when, the cork freely

withdrawn, one decided pop would discharge the whole ferment.

And thus it was, Dennis and Letty had difficulty in getting him subdued. They were in a quaver of curiosity, but could not hold him to the point of sober connected relation. Letty held on to his coat: Dennis stayed his arms: they reasoned: they persuaded. But to no effect. His allocution, on the rampage, fumed and wrestled in repressed paroxysm at some imaginary object of dudgeon, which he danced after in pantomime fisticuffs into every corner of the stable.

"Oh you old snoozer!" (It is trying for us to report this language; but as a faithful chronicler, we are obliged to give it. Ears refined, bear with us.) "Wouldn't I snuff out yer bloomin' villainy! Wouldn't I put a head on yer! Wouldn't I tighten yer collar band! Wouldn't I mash yer ugly strawberry mug! Wouldn't I mop th' floor with ye! Ye ugly old file!" and Jip's muscular apostrophe withstood both Dennis and Letty.

"'Little brat,' is it? Humpbacked lightening! Jus' lem me at 'im;" and Jip tugged to escape Letty's coat-tail clutch. "'Stole it in Wash'n'ton Park,' did ye?" and Jip "reached him one" in the ribs. "'Last June' now, p'rhaps it wuz: take that too:" and Jip "carromed" onto another imaginary rib. "'Tryin' t' find out whose it is':" this time a "stinger" on the eye.

And all the while the avenging Jip ducked and dodged, rushed on and retreated, lunged and guarded with all the affected science of a Yankee Sullivan.

But Dennis and Letty persevered, and they were, *apparently*, getting the advantage, when suddenly—

* * * he broke away once more,
Sput'ring in hoarse whisper as before;

"'Workin' it down,' be ye, y'ole swivel eye! How'll ye stomach that swipe;" and in imagination Jip "landed," terrifically this time, on his enemy's rotundity. The momentum of this last effort entangled him on the floor in a set of double harness, where, under the weight of the coachman, quickly followed up and combined with that of the maid, he finally collapsed. Poor fellow! They both sat on him!

A little while after, and when Letty could at last command his wandering attention, she urged breathlessly, "*Do* you know where—Have you—Have *they* found the baby?"

Dennis had helped him onto a stool and was dusting him off with the carriage wiper. Finally to Letty, who stood excitedly before him, he became sane enough to answer faintly,

"You bet!"

"But where is the darling? Have you seen her? Have they hurt her? Who took her? Is she well?" all in rapid, loud whispered catechism.

Jip collapsed another degree, and helplessly regarded the questioner who was dancing before him and beating her hips with both hands, at each question.

"Sit down!" he faintly expostulated; at the same time motioning in a vague circumference, as though conjuring some convenience from space about him. Also, as protesting, "How can I ever go on while you're hopping up and down before me!"

She looked about; but no chair was near. She wouldn't leave Jip one instant in the anxiety of her suspense; and, as his enforcing look implied that assent was a preliminary condition, there being no nearer *convenience at hand*, she obeyed distractedly *and sat down with* emphasis on Jip's lap. She even

put her pretty round arm about his neck and again besought, "Do go on, Jip."

The young man acquiesced in the situation; and further to suppress and the better to support, he circled his own right arm 'round the young girl's waist.

"Y'u see," he made overture, didactically;

Letty fidgeted excitedly and encouraged, "Yes?"

Jip's eyes with roguish remonstrance upon the interrupter:—"*Can't* you sit still!"

"Y'u see," he recommenced, tightening the circuit, "th' Doc., he's put a screw on my patter, an' I dusn't rattle my clackbox too much."

"Oh!" in a note of dashed expectancy from Letty; and,

"Oh!" in a grumble of disgusted disappointment from Dennis.

"But," pursued Jip in argument, and his listeners were again instantly attentive, "*I* wuz th' means uv droppin' onto th' racket t' begin with; an' s' long's th' lay's kep' from th' Mistress, an' while we're gettin' th' cubs well covered, I think I might cut jes a leetle uv this ere cheese with *my* friends!"

"And I think so too;" pouted Letty, showing some breaking up signs. Dennis, on his part, maintained a politic and conservative non-committal.

"But you two mus' promis' not t' buzz this biz 'round anywheres." Great emphasis put on the last word.

They promised accordingly; and with such solemnity and punctilio as appeared to satisfy Jip; who also on his part, put a ratifying kiss on Letty's cheek as a seal to the compact. Thus hedged against any acci*dent of in*discretion, he went on and related—

But we already know the story. As it progressed,

culminating in interest to an exciting period here, falling off again into detail more prosaic there, the pretty plump metre about Jip's neck never failed to register Letty's sweet sympathy: and in the answering circuit about her waist there was always an ardent response.

The elder and less emotional Dennis, noting these flurrying barometrics, and remembering perhaps his own younger days; withal, willing to indulge the youth whose efforts had contributed to so much good fortune, withdrew after the story had been told, and busied himself in his usual duties about the stable. After this, all fluctuations ceased, and the circuits remained permanently "closed".

Jip had well earned his sweet pleasure, and Letty felt justified in indulging him. He pressed his love plea and she was a prejudiced judiciary. In truth the bench upon which she was trying this cause, was not one promotive of tranquil impartiality. It was subjected to an adjacent influence. It was stationed too near the plaintiff.

She had withdrawn her pretty arm from his neck, but through an absorbed intent upon the story related, had forgotten to abdicate her seat. Jip did not interrupt this abstraction, but solicitously watched his destiny in her downcast eyes. Taking advantage, under the glow of the narrative, he sought to bring kindly inclination to positive decision.

"Y' know my little dot, I'm dead gone on yer. An' yer know th' promis' y' made me!"

"But, Jip my d—" She blushed and bashfully withdrew the term of endearment; "You haven't yet really brought back my baby."

"But *we're goin'* to."

The court cast a roguish eye, though glistening with

"BUT YOU HAVEN'T," OBJECTED LETTY. (Page 357)

recent tears, upon the plaintiff, and echoing the future tense of his answer, replied,

"'Going to!' Then perhaps—I'm '*going to*—' marry —somebody."

"But we will;" insisted Jip.

"But you haven't;" objected Letty.

With all Jip's cunning assurance, cornering this maid with any condition but certainty, was like trying to balance a barrel on a pike staff. Letty withheld commitment of vows until such time as her "dearest Crissie" was safe once more "in Mrs. Clifford's own, *own* arms."

"But," she bashfully encouraged, "ask me the question once more, *then*, and see how I'll answer it.

"But I know, Jippie," consoled Letty at last, (pronouncing his name like "Chippie",) "that you're sure in the end. If I wasn't, perhaps——"

Jip read the conclusion in her eyes, and this time when he pleaded—"Kin nI?" she was not so tantalizingly dilatory as upon a former occasion. She consented her moist red lips to his at once.

And there they sat. And the same old story, that is as dear to maids and servitors, as to mistresses and gentlemen, was again told over; with looks and sighs, of hearts and eyes; with hands infolded, lips that yielded, just the same, with maid and dame, one hundred years ago.

Fury looked on knowingly and craunched his hay. Dennis was knowing enough not to look on, but minded his business otherwise; and all progressed very prettily, very quietly, and no doubt very satisfactorily to the duo most nearly concerned, until—suddenly and *abruptly* there was interposed a peremptory stay to *these* proceedings.

To understand the cause of this precipitate interruption, we have again to go back an hour in the alternating tide of this mutable Monday. We recall it from the stable, and recount it in the parlor.

CHAPTER XXV.

LOVE'S SUASION.

Skirting the verge of auspicious event.
Love's wishful whisper; and the tide of a critical expectancy.

ISABEL watched Jane Stanhope's heavy sleep. She mused within herself upon this woman's sad life. "Yes, it must have been a dreary one! Look at the record which that life has lined upon her face! Happy conditions and fair gifts have been changed to measures of turbulent sorrow in this poor creature's existence!"

But at the beginning there had been promise of much! Under all the impress of the later years' devastation, there could yet be discerned the fair facial cerography of earlier and happy environment. Only gentle culture and refined habitude could so have fashioned it. It was not common-place.

A graceful barque, having contour of beauty and with white sails, freighted with love and the object of fair hopes, she had been rudely seized. Spoiled of her goodly mantling, the expectany of bright propitious capabilities annulled, she had been ruthlessly degraded *to a carying trade* of infamy. This story was plainly *written there*, and Isabel could read it. Alas, how had

brutish malignancy abused and endamaged fairest proportions!

And she was not old in years. Possibly thirty-six. Under a gentle estate, would she not now recover? Would not fair lines reinstate, to the partial concealing of those scars of the treacherous past?

Isabel bent over her. Skin, soft in texture; and lineaments of delicate mould. Hair, silk-like and of blackest glossiest shade; but now straying in tangled strands; and here and there the cruel evidence of its violent abuse. Unsightly bruise-discolorations blotching the white surfaces of her face arms and neck. The hands, veined and thin: the features, hollowed wan and worn. What a sketch for Isabel's contemplation as she studied the picture, bending over and gazing upon this slumbering woman!

But, thank God! the clouds have at last opened. And now a broad bar of new and blessed prolusion is resting upon this waste of nature. God grant that the portent find fulfillment! God grant that flowers and graceful verdure spring once more into this life, where now lies such dismantled havoc!

A tap on the door; and Isabel, diverted from her regard of the sleeper, rises. She receives a card from Letty. A soft flush comes to her face as she glances at it.

"Say to Dr. Jourdan," she returned answer, "that I will be down very soon." In a moment more she lingeringly drew away from the bedside. She marveled in realizing how wistful were her sympathies *toward this* woman. In moving from the room she *could not seem* to withdraw her eyes, but she retreated,

backward toward the door, continuously dwelling upon that face.

"Softly, lest I disturb her;" she was saying to herself. She was not able to analyze these promptings. Just as well! The sweetest kindliest natures, those dear loving angels of rescue whom God sometimes sends to fallen humanity, they might abate their blessed influences, if to themselves was permitted a conscious analysis of their own gracious winsomeness. And such an one was Isabel. As she descended the broad stairs, she sighed and wondered, because within were impulses that caused her to say: "I feel attracted—drawn to her. Do pity and sympathy stir affection? I could do much for her! It may be possible that she has *a mother* somewhere, waiting, loving, and *longing* for her."

This maternal association brought back the thought of her own yearning defeated motherhood, and its unwarned recurrence startled her self-control. At the moment she was entering the drawing-room, and could only, with the greatest effort, command herself. Tears were brimming in her eyes; and covering her face she would have retreated, had not Dr. Jourdan, coming immediately forward, held out his hand and said,

"Please don't go back."

Something in his tone (she could not look at him) inclined her to acquiescence. She continued on into the room, her head averted, and her handkerchief pressed to her eyes. Advancing thus, she felt her hand taken; and yielding to the guidance proffered she took the seat which she became aware that he had led her to.

Seating himself at a little distance from her, he continued, "I would not ask you to stay, save as I take a *physician's privilege* in making the request. I want

to say that I am glad to see your tears. I have become alarmed for your affections. They threaten to become like a parched fountain, bed-seamed with the drouth of water long gone, the hardened surfaces beseeching for the rain. Tears will help you."

"Indeed then I wish for them;" she answered simply.

There was a sympathetic quality, quite unusual in the doctor's voice, as he had spoken. Its pulse, like an echo, still beat in Isabel's thought. After a few moments, casting a furtive glance, her handkerchief still at her face, she beheld a moisture, too, in his eyes. However, he was sitting very quietly now, and he added no more. He gravely waited her recovered composure. But from that little instant when she had so shyly looked out at him, sorrows of her own bore less heavily. It was as though a lightening halving influence had bespoken permission to share them, and already they were less solely her own. And too, she was startled in noting this very evident sympathy. Nevertheless in her heart she thanked him for it. He seemed to bear her sorrow company, and the solitude of her own calamitous concern lost a part of its desolation.

Nearly recovered now, she looked up. He was thoughtfully waiting, evidently with some matter of importance on his mind. Noticing her regained composure, he commenced,

"Do you know the person who has surprised—" Then discarding this roundabout preface, he asked directly, "Do you know Jane Stanhope?"

"He had seen her then! Perhaps at the time when *she entered*! He knew her name! But what of this? *He was* very much among poor people. Perhaps he

would—perhaps he came there to help her! Ah, how kind and good of him!" All this with an increasing inward glow. Then she answered:

"Yes; I know that the poor hunted creature upstairs, is Jane Stanhope. She gave me that name."

Evidently the doctor was disconcerted at this. He essayed a continuance of what he came especially to say, but he did not succeed. He was embarrassed indeed in deciding *how* to proceed. It was not his purpose (very far from it) to tell this mother that the woman whom she was harboring above, was the guilty creature who had stolen and now held the lost child Crissie in detention. Isabel did not yet know this. So much was apparent. But what could be Jane Stanhope's errand there! Good or bad? He hoped—good. She would not, he concluded from what he had learned of her, in reasonable likelihood be there with a sinister motive.

Then the reward, concerning which he had learned that morning, flashed upon his mind. He reconsidered. Was she then the advance negotiating agent? This too he discarded. To boldly send a messenger, before preliminary negotiations had safely opened the way, would have been a foolhardy move on Burle's part. On the whole, he inclined to adhere to his first conclusion, that Jane Stanhope was there with good endeavor: and further—but this suppliment brought new alarm—*and further*, that she would, in due course, confess to Mrs. Clifford the whereabouts of—"a lost child." And though the appearances were certainly confirmatory of his earnest hopes respecting the identity of that child, he was also quite sure that Jane could not know that it was *the lost darling* of the very woman to whom she *came to confide her* troubles.

And now we come to the particular motive that had hurried Dr. Jourdan to Mr. Harrington's house. He dreaded that such an extraordinary revelation should be abruptly announced to Isabel.

Whoever should break such agitating intelligence, might dare, at the outset, but a vague hint. An unwarned communication of this kind would overwhelm her. The tumult of such a returning wave might bear her down as had the first unexpected encounter. He had come therefore for the purpose of preparing the way. He would be in time and give that first hint himself. When the shock should come, for come it must, he wished, from precautions of a professional nature, if not for tenderer reasons, to be close to her.

Isabel's mind, too, was busy. The doctor had asked about Jane Stanhope. He certainly could have no interest, save a charitable or benevolent one! Yes: it was indeed characteristic of his goodness; and she looked up and exclaimed,

"O Doctor Jourdan, if you could but see the terrible marks upon that poor creature's face! Such cruel, cruel blows! Yes: and on her breast and neck, her arms, her shoulders. It is the saddest sight that my eyes have ever seen. Do you know about her?"

Jip's report of course had included mention of those woeful cries that had shivered through the great house upon Furnan street that morning; and now Dr. Jourdan was able quite correctly to infer the truth. Jane had fled from her keeper! And was it a mere casual impulse that had led her for refuge into the bed-chamber of the very woman whose cruel bereavement she had been instrumental in causing! It must be so. *What* marvelous Providence was there in all this!

"*Do* you know about her?" Isabel again had asked.

He roused from his reflections and answered; "Yes, Mrs. Clifford: I know—all about her."

She wished, but dreaded to ask, "Is she—Is she then such a very—bad woman?"

In her face he saw the question, and the dread also of what the answer might be, and he continued unasked,

"She has been more sinned against than active herself in guilt! Your tender heart would bleed for her could you know the enslavement that has held her in subjection; and how she has been detained in compulsory bondage and forced to act an infamous part. She is of gentle extraction. I will not speculate upon the discordant conditions that must have conspired to place her where she now is. It seems not to have been a consort of her free volition. The practices of the wretch who gave her those blows are much at variance with her natural impulses. She has a son——"

"Ah yes," Isabel went on, taking up his suspended sentence, "you remind me now that when she first came she spoke of him. He is a noble lad; so true and manly!"

"You know the son too?"

"He has been one of my Sunday-school scholars."

"For how long?" again asked the mystified doctor, almost inclined now to reconsider his charitable conclusions. Was there, after all, a depth of depravity in this woman and her son, transcending the average pestilent; or was this an added irresponsible complication in a yet deeper mystery of occurrence! However, reverting in mind to Mr. Grey's description of this woman, and dwelling upon his palliation of her *wrong, wherein duress* rather than inclination had been *attributed, he* concluded, "God's hand must be in

for some wise purpose. I cannot believe that the woman is acting here a continuation of her double dealing in Island Number Ten."

To the doctor's last question Isabel answered that Connie had been known to her in the Sunday-school during the whole of the present Summer. She went on in sentences warm with kind feeling for him.

Putting aside for the present, whatever there might be to wonder or perplex over in the surprising relations developed, Dr. Jourdan refused to believe that both mother and son would seek heart-rallying and soul-guiding comfort from the benefactress whose child they knowingly joined in conspiracy to detain. His mind then advanced to the necessity of the immediate present, and he proceeded to open the way toward a first suggestion of little Crissie's possible whereabouts:

"Mrs. Clifford——"

She instantly raised her head and looked earnestly at him. Women are endowed with wonderful intuitive faculties, but their first conclusions are sometimes astray. Isabel knew from the tone, and the grave and rather formal measure of his voice, that something very unusual was preluded. Her heart gave a start of protest, and for the moment she misunderstood him.

Upon the night of the musicale, this man's dignified and impressive defence of principles, evidently near his heart, interested and drew her. And since then, his earnest heedfulness, manifested continuously in active co-operation in behalf of little Crissie; and too, his solicitous regard for herself, so often and so delicately conveyed; all this had furthered even a kinder will *toward* him. Perhaps not as yet in a heart-sense that *pronounced* to her a persuading recognition. Rather, *so she thought*, as an associate upon whom one b

fully places a helpful dependence. "Strength" was his type, physical and intellectual; and this magnetic attribute was aided by a distinguished presence, regulated and controlled by rare good sense. She was drawn toward such a nature. Her lonely heart, like the spiral tendril unsustained, was groping upward in the dark of her affliction; was searching tremulously, though in conscious realizing sense she may not then have perceived, for that one dearest of all dear and loved earthly reliance.

Her father was much to her. But when can a parent ever supply that yearning hunger in the heart of a human, whose unconscious throb seeks assorting consort!

* * * * *

"But I found him whom my soul loveth: I held
"him, and would not let him go."

* * * * * *

"I am my beloved's, ... :"

* * * * * *

"Set me as a seal upon thy heart,
"As a seal upon thine arm:
"For love is strong as death; . . . . . .
"Many waters cannot quench love,
"Neither can the floods drown it:"

* * * * * *

She thrilled under the asking tone that he had betrayed, and she listened, though with a heart-expostulation, yet with a quicker pulse. He went on:

"Your dear little Crissie has been absent more than two months. It has been a sorrowful privilege, but I cannot now tell you how earnestly pursued, that I have taken in searching for some clue to her."

The mention of her lost child caused the tears again to start from her eyes. But she was corrected. Her

surmise had been erroneous; and in her heart she was all the more thankful to him; and, too, all the more gently inclined. However, he had spoken of Crissie, and instinctively she leaned nearer toward him. Strung for so long time past to such continued nervous tension, self-command was not as steady. Her great brown eyes were turned to his in wistful, though too, in dreading expectation.

"Do not hope too much, but Jip has picked up something that I wished to show you. He found it in a place and under conditions which give us some assurance. It is not a very decided clue, but it may be a track-print that will lead in the right direction. Here it is."

He had risen and was holding out the baby pin. She too had left her seat, and her hand trembled as she received it from his. She held it in her palm and struggled to control her agitation.

Her breath came quicker. Twice she essayed before she could speak. At last she barely whispered,

"The— The same kind that——"

Then as with a new motive, she sprang away, and in a moment was flying up the broad stairway. In another few moments she came hurrying back into the drawing-room, and going close to the doctor she placed in his hand a card from which five of these pins had been taken: seven were left; and the seven corresponded exactly in size and pattern to the one found. Her transient nervous tremor now was gone. She had gathered herself and stood again the eager spirited creature that she was; quick-breathing, but once more her strengthful vivid self.

She watched the doctor's face as he pursued the comparison; and he, feeling her eager eyes upon him, sought

to modify too confidant expectancy: "Don't build too much upon the clue. You will remember that many other people are using the same kind as this; but, considering the incidents and surroundings which attended the finding of this pin, we will venture just a little promise upon it, though it be a conditional one. Remembering too how various are the patterns of these little articles, we've narrowed the scope of search in that relation."

He was now holding this little cipher signal up to the light, eagerly regarded it, as though—"If it *could* but speak!" Her eyes had raised also, following it. Then they dropped from the pin to his. She thought within herself, "How gentle of him to bring me just this little sprig of comfort. Oh, if it *should* prove to be 'the dove's leaf'!" Then quite down and very softly in her heart, as though it was a sweet reflection, "He loves my little Crissie!" And then a deeper throb! But *that* she subdued with some trepidation, for it had brought a first startled flush of conscious introspection.

Dr. Jourdan realized concerning more than he dared tell her, both of his own longings, and of the child's probable whereabouts. But all in good time. To tell her of the first, under the shadow which overhung, would certainly be unseemly and ill-timed. To go too far in reporting developments concerning the child, was hazardous; since there was yet no propititious certainty. Too positive encouragement now, might prove a disastrous prematurity. He would hasten slowly, raising no anticipation that was not probable of realization.

He placed the pin in his vest pocket. But as his eyes *met hers again, he* knew that she asked for it. Even

such a straw of comfort was something, and accordingly he gave it to her. There was just a regret in doing so. He would have kept it, as the breadth of a link between them.

She took it with a motion as though she would have breathed upon it; but reconsidering, with the same fluttering flush she forbore; and instead she held it warmly pressed within her hand.

Then recalling to the woman in the chamber above, she asked;

"Won't you see her? I'm sure she needs your kind offices. She fainted, kneeling on the floor at my side. I carried her to my room. When she recovered she wished to talk, but I objected, promising that if she would sleep first, that afterwards I would listen to the sorrowful history."

He acquiesced, and side by side they passed up the great staircase: then further along down the corridor of the second floor, and finally into the half-darkened chamber.

Some women would have been satisfied in giving this poor creature a resting-place in a servant's room. Isabel's own had not been too good for bestowal by Isabel.

This thought came into Dr. Jourdan's mind as he entered and beheld the sleeper in that place, and he loved the regal attendant the more for the queenly service. "She has a tender heart for another's troubles. She would bind up the rude wounds and condone the repented fault. God bless her!" These his reflections, as he took the proffered chair at the bed-side and looked earnestly upon Jane's disfigured face.

Isabel stood by his side, her eyes too fixed upon the *sleeping* woman, and in her turn she meditated,

"How many such has he ministered to! God's kind Samaritan! Heaven send they might all fall to care so charitable!" Then stealing a look at his face, and further drawn to him because of the sorrowful sympathy discovered there, she continued in thought, "If some horrible chance had made me, such as she, poor thing! I should love him for that look." And then her heart quickened once more; for on the instant, his eyes had raised, and they transferred to her own with a lingering of the same softened light that had been falling from them upon the outcast. And as they fixed, changing and deepening by the throb of impulse that directed them into hers, there conveyed from them the first gentlest persuasion of his heart's appeal. But he said nothing.

He was seated. Isabel had remained standing. A chair was near. With his left hand he drew it around almost to his side, by the bed. Isabel accepted the silent invitation. Again they both turned to the face before them and the doctor in a low voice asked,

"Has she slept long?"

"Since a little before twelve;" answered Isabel under her breath, for Jane had moved uneasily.

"Do you know about her?"

"Yes:" very simply answered. Then she qualified, "I only infer in general sense what she *has* been. Poor soul! she came to me like a wounded creature, fleeing from the wolf. She asked to confide her sorrowful story; but, as I told you, I would not listen until she had slept. She was exhausted."

"Was she not— How could she——"

Isabel anticipated his question: "Yes, she *was* under great nervous excitement; but I gave her an opiate."

Dr. Jourdan looked at the firm white hand, resting

on the bed's side, and which supported as Isabel leaned partially toward Jane. He kissed it in his thoughts. Such rare consideration, and such heedful expedient adopted in a case where already he perceived the patient to be on the verge of a dangerous brain fever, touched him in humane acceptance; and too, called forth his ardent professional admiration. He thought within himself, "What a helpful companion——" And then he qualified in some confusion—"assistant for a physician!" He *said* however, very simply, "This was indeed thoughtful. Perhaps you have saved her a physical break-down, at the very last moment."

"Then I am so glad!" exclaimed Isabel interestedly. "Will she be in danger when she wakes?"

"I cannot tell you until she does wake;" he answered. "But every minute to her now, is a good medicine. Did she tell you how she came by those cruel marks?"

"She was about to do so, but she seemed in too great distress. I urged that she lie down and take some rest. I promised that I would call her at three, and that then she should tell me."

"I can tell you now;" said the doctor.

Isabel was surprised; "Did you know her?" Her mind had gone back to what the doctor said about Jane's gentle antecedents.

He understood her. "I did not know her then. I have known *of* her since." Answering her further look of inquiry he continued: "I learned her whole sad history last Saturday night,"

(Still the unsatisfied look;) "at the Office of The Society of Organized Charity. Did your father never *receive* a letter from Jane Stanhope?"

Isabel could not recall that he had.

"A letter I mean, asking for aid."

Then the remembrance came to her. The evening of the musicale: the letter from the widow which she had read, leaning over her father's shoulder; and the little boy waiting below, who brought it. "Oh, yes! Now I do recall such a letter. But I did not understand then that it was Connie Stanhope who brought it. Indeed, the last name "Stanhope,' I have never associated with him. I have called him simply 'My little Connie'. Then," Isabel continued, once more resuming, "she is a widow; for she spoke of herself in that letter as such."

"She did not write the letter;" quietly replied the doctor.

More mystery still? And now her deep brown eyes are looking steadfastly into her companion's with a very earnest asking.

"No, she may have copied it; but it was compose and contrived by the brute who gave her those u marks."

"And Connie brought it! But dear Connie," protested Mrs. Clifford, "I know that *he* is a good bo Don't tell me," she pleaded, "that *he* is bad! I cou not be so deceived in those eyes." Then suddenly, in mind she connected the relationship, "Why, yes; s told me when she first came in, that she was l mother. But how could *such* a boy's mother——"

But the doctor had lightly touched her hand. the warmth of her advocacy and inferences she h raised her voice, and Jane stirred restlessly.

How that touch thrilled her! It invoked into h eyes the first suggestion of a look that one woman h *but for one man in* all the wide world. She hastily hid *it though, and* the interrupted sentence lapsed into

quick drawn breath, as the light contact left her warm hand.

After this followed a long silence; and perhaps we may say that the first soft springing of a fragrance, sweetest beyond all else earthly—for it is a suasion nearest heaven—was mutually perceived, and borne in the breaths between them.

After the sleeper had quieted, the doctor continued in explanation,

I had a special reason for desiring to know who was the occupant of Room Twenty-eight, in "Island Number Ten," and Mr. Grey gave me this poor woman's record. She has lived there under cruel coercion."

Isabel bent toward the doctor and with an eager face proposed, "Can we not then work together in trying to save her? Say, with me, that she shall never go back to this unjust subjection!"

It was with a gentle will that she proposed, and her luminous eyes looked up into his with sweetest urging, as wishing to divide this good office with him. The frank ingenuous desire for mutuality, in this charitable reclamation, was a joyful token to the doctor, and he eagerly accepted it. He made haste to answer:

"I should—I could never be happier, Mrs. Clifford, than in working for good *with you*." But he almost feared that this was too much for him to say, or that he had said it with too earnest a significance. He dared not meet her eyes in making his response.

But she took no alarm. She cast down her face, as meditating upon this kind endeavor that they were to share together. The doctor continued, referring to the history as given him at the Society's office,

"*It is* a long story, and probably you will soon know *it from her* own lips."

"Will you make me a promise?" he next asked, quite abruptly.

Again she was startled, and the color mounted to her face.

"It is a very simple one;" he hastened to explain, "and I am prompted to ask it only for your good."

"I promise then;" she acquiesced, reassured. Her voice though was scarce above a whisper, but the apprehension was gone; and she consented in confiding committal before she knew the exaction.

"Perhaps," he went on in explanation, "this woman may have in her story, something that will strangely affect you." He was intending to say more, but Isabel sprang to her feet. Clutching both hands with a frantic gesture into her bosom, she gasped rather than asked,

"Not Crissie! Oh—not Crissie!"

He rose quickly also. His halting speech grew now to absolute embarrassed uncertainty. No: indeed it would never do to tell her! Not yet. Certainly he had not, in broad interpretation, so intended. But upon even a hint, her quick intuitions seemed to have perceived and read his mind. And now she stood quivering, her great eyes fastensd to his face, and her breath held back in eagerest suspense.

"You must control yourself;" he pleaded. "I did not say—anything—about Crissie."

"Oh, but were you not going to?" and in the forgetful abandon of her intense eagerness, and drawing her breath fast, she pressed close to him and put a hand upon his shoulder. She besought with her eyes, the more surely to read his very thoughts.

"No, truly." Such was his answer; though his open *nature shrank from* even this implied avoidance of

truth: and above all, with this woman! But her own welfare was involved, and he very slowly and very steadily added, "I have nothing to say about Crissie."

She quickly withdrew the hand, as though but at that moment conscious of where it had flown.

"Then what *was* the promise that you sought?"

He must go back over the preface again. "If this woman's history, as she may give it to you, should comprise incidents; should—" Again he was almost stammering. He was indeed straitened for a method that should suggest but not startle. He realized that he was heading upon a dangerous dilemma and he paused now, entirely embarrassed.

But poor Isabel had relinquished the flaming hope that for a moment had flashed its light upon her. The reaction left her almost weak. But it was with most amiable will to aid him that she took up his halting sentences, and essayed for him;

"You know what she will tell me: you think that it will cruelly shock me: you wish to spare me. But have no fear for me. I have heard like stories before." She paused and was silent. How could she tell him that her heart was never so deeply stirred with longing to give aid, as when opportunity presented to stretch a hand with rescue down to one of these poor, wan, wretched Magdalens: whose sad eyes implore; but silently, and without the speech which dares ask for help! Dying in such piteous need, the pale face lifted appealingly across the barrier which holds apart from happier circumstanced sisters! Agonizing, oh sometimes how hopelessly, at all times how desperately, to come back once more to honorable associations! Finally she yielded to the impulse in so far as to say,

"Some of my lady acquaintances have harshly

chided me for trying to help an unfortunate sister. However, I cannot withstand the impulse to put my hand into hers when she is in such dire need of help. But Papa never scolds me. He says that I am right: that it will bring me no harm. Why are women so inexorable!"

Here she came to a startled halt. Where *was* she leading! The color rose even in her neck.

But the doctor was loving her the more fervidly for it all. He hastened with quick tact to cover her confusion, and once more he took up his own interrupted preface.

"I will be frank then Mrs. Clifford, in saying that I do dread for you the nervous draft, in a sympathetic sense, which this poor woman's story will make upon you. I know that she will—I think—I fear that she will—" The breakers loomed again, but now he essayed at them bravely. "I want you to be prepared for a strange, perhaps a most startling relation from this woman's lips. But whatever she tells you," he hurried on to say, "promise me that you will not let it—let it *excite* you. I don't know what other word to use." And the doctor concluded, with the perspiration almost starting from his forehead.

He sought to imply, and to have Isabel realize that he *was* implying, in some roundabout way: but not definitely. He dared not specify. He wished to couch a warning in some phrase that she would but half comprehend; but which, nevertheless, in partial measure would anticipate for her the awful shock of the disclosure, when finally it should come from Jane—"*I have stolen a little child!*" These words, as in expectation he heard them *confessed, stood* boldly forth in his imagination, and *they startled* even him. He dreaded then the whirlin

effect they would have, when uttered by this woman to Isabel, whose concern was a hundred fold increased, but whose measure of preparation for such a revelation lacked even a moiety of that knowledge, which he even, possessing, was yet unsteady under.

Had he been addressing to a woman with but a modicum of intelligence, such an accomplishment would have been possible. But with Isabel's quick intuition and superior aptitude, it was impossible. Therefore, finally, he gave up the attempt, and uncertainly "hoped" that these words, after all, might not be spoken. But he realized this to be a vague reliance.

Yes, the declaration of the abduction was certainly pending. The confession would come in some form, for it was the woman's evident intention to unburden her heart. He could not parry this conclusion: he must accept it. And now he looked with a solicitude so earnest into the face of the woman beside him, that her eyes fell in manifest embarrassment before that intense anxiety of regard.

There was but one way in which to provide against the inevitable shock that he now decided would come whenever this sleeper should wake to breathe into Isabel's sympathetic ear the tale of her past doing. He dashed desperately at it:

"I haven't yet stated definitely the promise that I wished to ask of you," he hurried on. "It is this: When this woman's sleep ends, and she asks to tell you her story, then, before you permit her to enter upon it, will you suffer me to stipulate that I shall be called, and remain in waiting in the drawing-room below?"

"What a strange request!" Her eyes said so to *him.*

Then he skirted about the truth; all for her sake.

always for her sake! "You cannot tell what medical aid you may need for her!"

Though the explanation was but vaguely satisfying, yet Isabel delicately refrained from seeking for that, which, on account of some reason unknown to her, certainly appeared to embarrass the doctor. She consented, saying quite simply,

"Yes, Doctor: I promise you."

Still Jane slept on; and the two watchers stood for some minutes longer, looking down upon her. Then Dr. Jourdan bethought himself about going, being particular to emphasize, as he took his way down the broad staircase, "I will remain at the office. *Don't forget your promise.*"

Assuring him that she would send word when Jane should awake, at the same time mystifying over the singularity of the request, she accompanied him to the front door and there responded to his *au revoir*. "'Till three o'clock;" she reminded, still standing in the open door-way, half absently watching him as he moved down the wide flags, and off in the direction of his residence.

Dr. Jourdan never received that recall!

A few minutes before it reached his office, and while he was yet anxiously awaiting it, a neighbor rushed in, and vehemently claimed his professional skill in immediate aid of a brother practitioner, and in behalf of a patient who was fast sinking.

The case was but a short distance from his own home. In the face of such an exegency what true *physician can pause* a moment in hesitation? In his *excited haste the* man hurried Dr. Jourdan away before

he had bethought himself to arrange for word to be sent after, should the message from Isabel come during his absence.

Just as well. He could not have responded to it.

Three o'clock struck a short time after, and at that moment the doctor was calling upon every faculty of professional accomplishment to save a young mother's fast ebbing life.

After nearly an hour of persistent and constant endeavor, success finally rewarded his efforts. Then Dr. Jourdan, with mindful remembrance of the expected summons from Isabel, took hurried leave of a thankful household. But nevertheless it was with direful misgivings that he hastily bent his steps toward Clinton Avenue.

He looked anxiously at his watch as he approached Mr. Harrington's doors. The hands noted exactly,

FOUR O'CLOCK!

CHAPTER XXVI.

A STARTLING DÉNOÛEMENT.

After the promise, and the departure of the doctor from the Harrington mansion, as narrated in the last chapter, Isabel, in meditative thought, had returned slowly up the stairs. She paused at the landing. Opening her hand she contemplated that tiny little voucher. It permitted a hope for her dear child. It *was also* a link of sweet suggestion. It prompted gen*tle musings*. But those she would not indulge.

Nevertheless, for her there was a doubled strand to

the cord of its attraction. One filament represented hope for the restoration of her child. How a little thing like this might afford specious latitude for such indulgence, she would not analyze. Dr. Jourdan, for his own reasons, had not explained this to her. But, that he thought so, was a buoyant and an exultant reflection.

"How good of him to bring me even this little comfort!"

Her mind then went back to the musicale. This man, in retrospect, looked nobly grand as she remembered him. Rather above the common height, with strong earnest features. The broad white forehead! The large clear dark eyes! Not round eyes that gleamed a deep black, but of a softer kindlier shade. She had noticed too, his firm shapely hand, as with a quick eager motion, peculiar to himself, he had pushed his fingers through and carried back his hair.

"Surely I may think of him as——'a friend.' My *dear* friend. Are not our true friends 'dear' to us? Papa is the only other: but I don't speak of Papa as 'my friend.' Dearest Papa! He loves me. I love him back more than I ever loved another in all the world. But ought I to say that? I—have—had a husband. But it was for such a little time: a short two months! Should I have loved him in that time more than Papa? Perhaps—Yes I think—that—perhaps I should have grown to love him. I did not have the opportunity."

"But *this* one!" And after the introspection she looked up distressfully, and then about her apprehensively, as though to guard a tremulous reverie, which, *in its indulgence*, brought a rebuke from the distresses

of the present, and a graver protest from the memories of the past.

Of late she had been conscious of some disquieting misgivings in respect to her first marriage. She was young then: and a maiden without a mother is sometimes led to believe that she loves a man, when her sentiments are only kindly toward him. There is nothing unexplainable about this. Never having loved in deepest perceptive sense, the young girl has no standard of comparison.

"'But this one!' Yes, I shall think of him as my dear friend. Surely may I not? All to myself though. Only to myself. He has been very faithful to me. On that sorrowful afternoon, when I waked to my misery, I saw a deep pity in his eyes. In the confusion of all that horror I can remember it. But I know now that it was because—because—perhaps I was more to him than a stranger patient. We are neighbors. But his sympathy touched and drew me, and I could have clung then to his hand for help. He came so often after that! And I began to watch for him! The light came with him: and it seemed to go again—without him.

"Do patients always grow to think so much of their physicians? And then, no one in all the house could seem to comfort and encourage me in just the way, yes, in *just the way* that he did. And he talked freely about my lost darling. Others avoided that subject. Yes, he 'knew'—he '*knew*' that she would come back to me.

"And now I seem to have grown to know it also; at least to *expect* it, in some way—through him. God watch over thee my baby darling," her lips moved and her face was lifted, "and restore thee once more to thy waiting mother's lonely heart!"

The tears filled her eyes. "Almost always now, when I think of Crissie, the tears come. He said that he was glad to see them. They do help me. My heart seems to breathe easier after them. At first all was so parched, so stony. I remember, did he not say that God so willed it; all this my trouble; but that the end was fixed as unchangeably in His purpose as the event? Ah, when will that end come? And will its advent truly bring me my darling? When I have her nestling in my arms once more, it does seem as though I could then, in unrestrained thankfulness, tell my friend how much he has done for me."

"'The end, fixed as unchangeably in His purposes as the event.' And already, to that end, God has been kind to give me such a friend. Ah, shall I keep him!

"They tell me that he is tireless in devices and plans for the restoration of my child. God help him! Surely I may say that. Gentle Jesus, according to the measure of my thankfulness to Thee, recompense 'my friend' for all that Thou hast prompted him to endeavor for my sake!"

And yet she stood there; her eyes fixed upon the pin. It lay in the warm hollow of her hand.

Was she thinking of Crissie? Yes: always of Crissie. But associated now with that mother-suasion, was another, which intertwined the first; and both strands, united, interwove this doubly strengthened bond of sweet cordiality. It drew and kept her eyes still fixed upon so simple a little index as this pin.

There are no *trifles* of association. The simplest thing, a lock of hair, a withered bud, a single strain of music; any one of these may wring or exult a heart.

That dried faded clover leaf, within the pages of that Bible! There are millions of its kind: but a mother's

hand placed this one there. And now her eyes dim with quick tears whenever she chances upon it.

A cold bleak day late into the Autumn, and a few whirling flakes of snow chased by the blustering wind! Shriveled leaves scurrying about, and the swaying branches which bore them above, now denuded and bare! A recent grave in a far away land! This mother kneeling beside it! She may never hope to linger at that spot again. She is going away; a long—long ways; she is going back to her own Country; back to her own home. There is a struggling heart-throb of remonstrance that she must leave here the ashes of her beloved child: and in this foreign land! So far——so far away! It was as she took this last adieu, and with her tears falling upon it, that she severed this tiny clover from its chosen lodge, nestling at the grave's head: and she placed it within the leaves of that Bible. How much indeed it signifies now to her!

Isabel had a large heart; a loving heart. And too it was a yearning heart. It was not a heart of cold self-reliant singleness: and now that it had been despoiled of a dearest object of concern, it groped pathetically in a dark and lonely isolation. What wonder that an answering throb responded to the genuine and honest solicitation of the doctor's manly nature!

And therefore, this little pin, a nothing in itself, was *two-fold* in the bond of palpitating hope that associated about it. Nevertheless she had not, without many swelling tremors, attempted to interpret to herself the *vague* but yet quickening current that the second *strand* of this associating link stirred within her.

Still with her eyes fixed upon the little object yet

lieing upon her open palm, and moving very slowly, she approached her chamber. Gently pushing open the door, a stronger light came suddenly into the hall. As though it threatened a secret, she tightly closed her hand. Then she looked toward Jane.

"Peacefully sleeping!"

She softly entered, closed the door behind her, approached and seated herself close by the slumberer. She was still, very still for a long time. Very pensive: very thoughtful: very meditative. Finally she unlaced the bosom of her dress, and she pinned this little witness, secretly, softly, and very securely within. After this she bestowed her attention on Jane.

Her charge was resting quietly, and Isabel moved about on tip-toe. She darkened a too-glaring light from a window, and otherwise considered the comfort of the patient. Then she softly withdrew and closed the door.

A few minutes before the hour stipulated she returned again. She approached, leaned across the bed and studied the face of the sleeper. It was now almost three o'clock. She procured some lavender water, and with a few drops each time in the hollow of her hand, she smoothed the unconscious woman's forehead. Then the solicitude extended to her hair, and finally she took the hands. Her great measure of yearning compassion must find some channel of expression!

As the hour of a dainty time-piece upon the mantel approached nearer to three, she pressed a closer touch upon brow and hair. Her hand lingered with more cordial gravity in its sisterly offices. Thus graciously could she discharge her pledge to awaken; and soon, in awaming response, Jane moved in returning conscious-

Slowly coming back, but yet half somnolent, she began talking. Perhaps it was a semi-waking dream about her girlhood's home; and perhaps, about a mother; for she caught Isabel's hand, pressed it to her bosom, and murmured that sacred name.

"But I am your sister;" spoke Isabel, as though in answer to her entreaty. "Is your dear mother alive?" This last while bending over, and addressed quite directly to Jane, whose wide wondering eyes sought here and there, as in a strange confusion of localities.

Soon she grew satisfied as returning remembrance enabled, and she answered,

"I have no mother now. Did you say that you could be my sister?"

"Yes."

"I would not let you."

"And why?"

"You are pure and good. I scarce dare take your sunshine, only that it is the first blessed influence that has fallen into the waste of my life for years—and years. And oh, it melts my heart!"

"And has it hurt the sunshine?"

Jane looked almost reverently at her. "Then I *may* have it—for a little while?"

"It shall always be yours."

Jane hid her face, and her lips moved in a new prayer of thanksgiving.

Soon she moved to rise, and Isabel aided her. Finally upon her feet, and adjusting her dress, she suggested faintly, very reluctantly,

"And I am to go now?"

"But you said that you came to me for help—to tell *me* something."

"And I *may* tell it?" This with eager wishfulness.

"As soon as you take some food. I have sent for it. And when you have eaten you will have better strength to speak."

"Ah, dear lady, I cannot, I am not worthy to eat under this roof. And it is only because God prompts that it will lighten my load, and since you so sweetly permit, that I wish and can presume to confess my troubles to you."

The humility which hesitated to accept a proffered hospitality, wishing only to confess a sad story, touched Isabel; and it was with an effort at cheerfulness that she insisted with a show of bustling preparation,

"No, you shall sit here and first have your chocolate, and eat your eggs and toast; and then afterwards, how and as you will, tell me—all about yourself. And I know, too, a good friend who also knows you. But you don't know him. However I will be your messenger, and he shall give us—— such wonderful counsel! And we must find another home for you, and something to do, and never—*never* shall you go back to that dreadful place.

All this she said with a sunny insistence, warming each sentence with her cordial tones; and, too, with an air of arranging everything all so comfortably: and as she concluded, her lovely eyes beamed down upon Jane's upturned wonder-fixed face.

"Wouldn't you like to meet that friend?" suddenly proposed Isabel rising, remembering her promise to notify Dr. Jourdan.

"Oh no!" now objected Jane, very much alarmed. "You are all the one I want."

Poor woman! Her heart was brimming full of Isabel; and *indeed there* was no present room for any one

"But I made him a promise when you were asleep; and I ought to keep it. I said that I would call him when you awoke. Won't you let me send for him?

"It is only to encourage and wish you well, and perhaps make some wise suggestions;" further explained Isabel. Jane had still hesitated.

"It is not to listen to—to——" Her voice had fallen very low, and she was faintly whispering, with a pleading in each word.

"No indeed!" emphatically pronounced Isabel. "How could you think it?

"We'll have him, you know," she explained persuasively in continuation, "near at hand, only to refer to for advice if something knotty troubles us in deciding about your future. Don't you know," and she playfully pursed up her red lips and wrinkled her forehead demurely, "that men, although they are——'such trials!' nevertheless they do seem to be indispensable? And I promised this gentleman that he should be retained as—well, suppose we say—as consulting counsel."

As Jane did not urge further objection, Isabel once more enjoined, "Now commence your lunch, while I go to discharge my promise."

"My promise! My promise!" she was softly repeating to herself as she sped away to give directions about the errand: and her breast fluttered to hear this word, thus associated: musing—meditating—pondering: perhaps on a time, and perhaps upon a promise which should reach to Eternity! Oh, what would not such an one with him bring, when even this trivial pledge so thrilled her!

In compliance with directions received, Dennis im-

mediately undertook to notify Dr. Jourdan, and then Isabel returned to her visitor.

The lunch had been finished and the tray sent away: "May I hold your hand?" Jane asked with a shrinking hesitation.

Isabel was occupying an easy chair, and Jane, upon a low ottoman, was sitting at her side. A cordial stretching down of the hand was Isabel's kindly manner of response. It was instantly and eagerly taken in both hers by Jane, and then, for a few moments, both women were silent.

"A long time ago," Jane spoke very slowly, always holding fast to that hand, while her eyes were fixed upon the white breadth of wrist above it, "I had a mother: a father too. They were very proud of me. Two brothers I had also, who loved and petted me. I was an only daughter, and perhaps—perhaps I had my way too much."

Then for a while she stopped speaking. Soon she repeated again, barely above her breath, as though she called back the meditative retrospect of a sorrowful grave,

"A long—long time ago!"

"Was it so very many years?" asked Isabel.

The question roused Jane from her reflective retrospection, and she answered,

"Fifteen: fifteen desolate years! Fifteen dreary dragging rounds of servitude to a bad man. But I do not wish to speak of him now. My father was wealthy merchant in New York. I had all that the most unthoughtful indulgence could give. I grew to think that my wish could never lead me astray; and for *a husband I* accepted a man without breadth *manliness: and* as the event proved, without true love

on the part of either of us for each other. My father saw the danger and warned me. I did not heed him. In the face of his objections I married—*this*—*person*."

"'This person'!" thought Isabel. Then she asked, "Did you not learn to love him?"

"No: I did not. Had a true love sprung up later in my heart, his conduct afterwards would have killed it. I never knew what a deep love was until my baby was born. I married a man for whom I had merely a friendly regard; and I woke afterwards to the horrible discovery that I had cheated myself for life."

Isabel's mind went back with a tremor. Had Charles Clifford's accidental death saved her such a calamity! Jane repeated:

"I say that I never knew an object of deep love until after my baby was born." Then she paused again as though in further meditative retrospect. Rousing herself she continued,

"My mother sent me to the nursery after I was born, and I seldom ever saw her. My father scarcely ever noticed me, save as I grew attractive; and then only to exhibit me to his guests. It was only as I grew into girlhood and came to the family board that I really made the acquaintance of my parents."

"But your brothers!" exclaimed Isabel, breaking in at this point of the recital. "Don't say that you shared no affection with your brothers!"

"'My brothers';" repeated Jane sadly. "Ah, well! They *were* affectionate brothers; but we did not see very much of each other. Father took them early into his counting-room, and they were seldom at home."

"Not at breakfast, or dinner at evening?" reminded *Isabel.*

"No: they had rooms down at 'The Everett.' We lived up town."

"Poor girl!" commiserated Isabel. "How much your life has been deprived of!"

The tone and term of condolence touched Jane, and bending forward, she kissed the white wrist. Then with a sighing regretfulness, "Ah, could I have had a sister, though, like you, I should not now be the dreary object that I am! But let me go on.

"On account of my marriage, father became very angry with me; and very soon after, my mother died."

"Your poor mother's heart was broken!" sadly commented Isabel.

Jane looked up quickly, protestingly. "No;" she replied simply: "my mother's pride may have been wounded, but her death was not hurried, on my account, by any heart trouble. She died from inflammation of the lungs, brought on by exposure at a ball." Once more continuing:

"Father gave no thought to me——"

Here again Isabel interrupted, almost pathetically: "Oh, you must not tell me that!" Remembering her own father's thoughtfulness, and his tender care in lieu of a mother's, this avowal seemed like treason against fatherhood.

"I'm sorry then that I said it;" Jane replied humbly, and in a tone that asked forgiveness if she did wrong in so relating, "but father never sent me any word, and mother was buried before I knew of her death."

Isabel was shocked. She looked down with a pitying expression upon her face, exclaiming, "What wonder *that you went* astray!" The woman sighed and *still pursued her* sorrowful story.

"Father's business was settled up and he gone to Europe, when the word first came to me.

"My—husband," she named him such after a hesitating pause, "was never a comfort or reliance; and shortly after these troubles he deserted me. He had grown sullen, morose and bitter, because father would not make him an allowance: and I came to know that he married me only for the money that he expected. He told me as much before he left me.

"Ah, well!" she continued absently, "I never laid it up against him. We were almost indifferent to each other. I have heard since of his death.

"Still, his abandonment at the time, distressed me. Shortly after, baby was born; and then one of my brothers found me. He urged me to go back home."

"Ah," Isabel eagerly interrupted, as descrying at last, one coming beauty in a landscape where all before had been barren, "that was indeed kind! And you went back with him?"

"I was obdurate, contrary, sensitive to the disgrace of my matrimonial failure, and desperate. I put it thus to myself:—'My brother does this only from duty:' and hastily deciding, I said——'No'.

"He did not insist against my will. When he went away he reminded me that whenever I wanted money, I had only to ask for it. He said that whatever sum I named, wherever to be sent, should be supplied me."

She sighed again, as though brooding over an ill-fatuity: "Money! Money had been given me in lavish abundance all my life. How little I cared for it! For me, how little it wrought; how little it *bought!* I only felt like hiding away somewhere and *loving baby.*

"*I did* hide away; and then came this——"

She started up panting, as if in bitter repellence of an abhorrent memory. But the next moment, realizing that in this expression of passion she had reliquished the only hand of woman that had ever been extended to her, she flew quickly back and repossessed it.

Isabel said nothing: she waited her further mood. Soon she went on, but now bending her head and hiding her face upon the hand that she clung to:

"You are pure and good; you must not hear the details of the dreadful life I have since lived."

"But," suggested Isabel, "why did you not break away from him, and return to your brothers?"

"Because," replied Jane in a whisper, "he trapped and frightened me into guilt with him, and I dared not. Then, as time passed, he sank me so deep in shameful collusive practices, and gained withal such harsh control over me, that I seemed to have no independent volition of my own; and then I could not."

"But now," brightly encouraged Isabel, "now you have escaped from him."

"Oh yes," cried the wretched woman, "if—if he does not claim me; if he does not come after me; if I can only hide somewhere."

Her hair had fallen, and she was looking about with startled mien and wild eyes, as though at that moment Burle might be hunting her through the house.

Isabel soothed and held her close; at the same time her eyes fired with a grand menace, and she uttered with a passionate challenge,

"Let him dare to do it!"

Then Jane abruptly started up again, exclaiming almost breathlessly, "But Connie!"

"Ah," soothingly insisted Isabel; "there's where our *doctor comes in.* He shall get your Connie for you

He must be waiting in the parlor now. Shall I send for him?" And she would have risen.

"But the baby!" again cried Jane; and this time with even more dismay than before.

"'The baby'?" queried Isabel with nervous consternation. "You didn't tell me— Oh I hope you haven't a child by this outcast ruffian!"

Jane was on her knees now, her face bowed and hidden in her hands, and in reply she falteringly confessed,

"No; but I helped him to steal one."

"Merciful heavens!" and in an instant Isabel had thrown herself down before her. She caught the covering hands away from Jane's face, and in an excess of swelling agitation demanded,

"When? Where?"

"In Washington Park—last June;" and Jane's heart was ready the next moment to sink, beholding the tumultuous effect that these words produced.

Isabel upon hearing them had staggered to her feet. It was again the foreboding calm; but not this time the precursor of nervous insensibility. There was indeed a coming tempest; but it would not prostrate. It would lash into a whirling fury.

With an awful torpor of composure Isabel crushed back the turbulent heart-swelling within her, until she could ask one—one more question. Quivering under the repressed intensity of her agitation, she put it:

"Where--is—the baby now?"

The cold blood was creeping over Jane, but she answered immediately, though with a throbbing bosom,

"*In* room Twenty-eight, of Island Number Ten."

Like an arrow, or a glancing flash in its passage, ——*Isabel* was gone. A few quick moments more,

and with eyes aglow and bearing of intensest excitement, she interrupted with a bound into the midst of the trio in the stable. Rapidly, sternly, but with terrible depth of impetuosity she directed,

"Quickly, Dennis! Put Fury before the cart."

Dennis looked at his mistress. The will and force that he met were towering. The astonished remonstrance that he would have urged, was hastened to farthest impossibility in an instant. He dared not so much as suggest to her that she hadn't a hat on her head.

Then she turned to Jip. He had hastily risen in astonishment.

"Do you know 'Number Twenty-eight, Island Number Ten'?"

He did: so he tremblingly managed to articulate. To Letty, who also stood by, her heart pumping, and her little body quivering, she said nothing. Only, once more, this direction to Jip, after his answer:

"Get up behind then."

Fury was out, and impatiently stamping. Dennis, as rapidly as trembling fingers would permit, was adjusting and buckling on the harness.

She went up to the animal. She put both bare arms up and clasped her fingers above upon the proud creature's shaggy mane. She hid her face against his glossy neck.

Honest Fury lowered his head and tried to stroke his velvet nostril along his mistress' shoulder; and she, in broken tones, persuaded to him passionately;

"Dear gentle noble Fury; give me your uttermost: give me your uttermost of furious haste—this hour." The adjuration was to her favorite. In spirit it was an *imploration; a prayer* to her God.

"FASTER—FASTER—FASTER, GOOD FURY!" (Page 375.)

Then she moved back from him and Dennis immediately backed the animal between the shafts. They were quickly raised; the straps fastened; she was in the seat with reins grasped. Jip leaped up behind. Dennis, with barely time to spring from before, had exclaimed in earnest entreaty to Jip as the wheels began to move, "For God's sake——"

He would have added, "do what you can to keep her out of trouble;" but the whirling clatter of the vehicle as it bounded from the stable cut him short, and he could only look after them in dumb amazement.

In her wild eagerness she had struck the animal with the whip. Probably it was the first time that she had ever done this. But Fury was a thoroughbred, and though he may have resented the stroke, he was generous. He kept his feet. But after that blow, all her strength was summoned to hold him; and the slackened traces showed a draft almost wholly upon the reins.

No matter! The effort was a relief from the burning eagerness that swelled within her. "Faster—*faster*—FASTER good Fury!" And yet she urged; although the animal already was shooting like a meteor down LaFayette Avenue.

Jip's seat faced to the back; but he dared not sit down. He stood up with blanched face to the front, and with both hands clenched in grim desperation upon the guard rail of her seat; his hat jammed down, verily, to his eyes.

She, with both feet planted; eyes ablaze; leaning far *forward* as though to aid and hasten the rushing *impulse*; her hair in heavy strands, loose and streaming: all this presented the spectacle of a fiery amazon,

storming with utmost endeavor in a mad reckless dash for refuge beyond, as against a cumulating pursuing vortex of annihilation behind.

At this moment the great clock in St. Luke's struck—

F——O——U——R r r r r r r r

At this moment too, Dr. Jourdan was hurrying up the broad approach to the Harrington mansion. He energetically rang the bell.

Consternation already possessed the household. Jane had been found unconscious upon the floor of Isabel's bed-chamber. Isabel herself, in the dog-cart behind Fury, had been seen to dash like a whirlwind down through the carriage-way; then off and along the Avenue, with Jip clinging in nervous desperation behind.

Then they had all rushed clatteringly to the stable.

Letty was able to report where her mistress had gone, and it was this information that met Dr. Jourdan, as he too was making his way in the same direction.

"I must follow her;" he said excitedly to Dennis. "Give me the fastest horse that you have."

"She knows the whole;" he exclaimed to himself in greatest alarm. Then, to Letty; "You must go with me. Fly and get your hat."

Next he turned to Dennis, and helped him buckle harness to a pair of greys.

"I give you these," explained Dennis hurriedly, "because they are fast flyers; though, lord knows, they stand no chance with Fury! Yes I must give you both, for they will only travel together."

This last in reply to an impatient objection which

the doctor was making, that Dennis should take even an additional minute in getting two horses, when the harnessing of one would consume less time.

"All right then;" the doctor had acquiesced. He wouldn't stop a moment to discuss, but continued to lend his own quick hands in assistance, saying nothing more.

"Yes;" Dennis continued with agitation, backing the animals before a double-seated open side-bar wagon, and raising the pole to its place, "you must have them both sir; but don't spare them sir: you take our hearts along with you sir: God help us if anything happens to Miss Isabel! She's in trouble——"

Again he was cut short, for now the last tug was attached. At this moment Letty came running back. Dennis had the horses, and the doctor, standing beside the wagon, gathered the reins into his hand.

Quick—in:" was all that he said; at the same time lifting the girl, and then springing himself to a seat beside her. In another moment Dennis stepped aside, gave the animals head, and at once the doctor was dashing over the same route that Isabel, not fifteen minutes before, had taken, in her impetuous rush for Island Number Ten.

CHAPTER XXVII.

RETRIBUTION.

A mother's love overrides every obstacle.

* * * * .

THE crown of the hill at Clermont Avenue was *quickly* passed, and Isabel, still pushing straight down *La Fayette*, continued on with a rushing clatter,

The wheels—good wheels! Staunch wheels! Well indeed it is that they are. They strike the car rails at the Fulton street crossing, and the contact is a resounding crash. There is a mad bound and the cart leaps into the air, the wheels spinning dizzily. Fortunately they take their hold of the pavement again squarely; but they come to the ground far beyond.

Isabel's breast heaved; her lips were apart; every breath was drawn with quick eagerness, and her whole bearing marked the flaming excess of her furious determination.

"Dear Fury! Noble Fury! Grand Fury! Oh, my heart flies on—*on!* On!"

"Am I right? Am I right?" she shouted backward to Jip; never swerving however in her impetuous way. And each time, as well as he could though his chattering teeth, he had answered her, "Yes: Yes."

Her advance was signalled by a rattling peal sounding far ahead, and pedestrians and vehicles, wagons drays trucks and carriages, warned by the 'larm, scurried from the line of Fury's tearing approach.

Mounted policemen were electrified; for she abrupted upon them with the burst of a catapult, and hurled by like the bolt from a columbiad. They spurred at top speed in eager pursuing endeavor to help or halt her; but she distanced and quickly left them impotently behind.

Women grew faint in witnessing the flight; and men held their breaths as this magnificent creature, with the grand daring of a Juno, presumptuously guided Fury's thundering hoofs through some dangerous gauntlet.

With it all, no one could mistake the spectacle for a *run-away. The* woman held her way with mien of

deadly earnestness; ever urging Fury to greater effort. Not once, either, had she lost him, in any untimely skip or awkward break.

Lighting finally, after the Flatbush crossing, upon the smooth paving of Schermerhorn street, the animal skimmed along this firmer foothold at a tremendous burst; and in much less than two minutes, a three-quarter-mile stretch was covered, and the Clinton street detour approached.

Guiding him at this point through a wide-circling arc, directed meantime as to her route by Jip, this turn to the left was safely accomplished; one block to the south quickly traversed; and then, after another successful turn back to the right, bringing her toward the river again, the excited animal entered finally upon the top of the last descending way, fairly launched upon State street.

Then once more, and for the last time, away! with now only a short distance before her to Furman street, and Island Number Ten.

This was the most reckless progress of all, being upon a sharply falling grade. The pace quickly became an awful one. She herself was dismayed, realizing that State street abutted and ended abruptly upon Furman. She knew that at this appulse she must either stop, or be stopped with a crash. Glancing along Fury's bounding sides she beheld his flanks and withers working with the dizzy velocity of a locomotive's drivers. His metal was on fire, and he was a blooded racer! She set about at once in endeavor to check this frightful momentum. She shouted to him; she threw her utmost strength on the reins.

The sparks scintillated in fiery tracks under his iron shoes, as the noble animal threw himself back in

obedience. Not a moment too soon! He fairly slid the last rod's length upon his haunches.

As he brought to a final stand under the sombre north wall of Island Number Ten, she flung the reins to Jip, leaped like a mad creature from the cart, sprang around the corner, and then sped along the west front of the building to the Furman street entrance. This reached, she turned quickly in, and went flying up the pit-hole staircase.

The only direction received from Jip had been, "Three flights, Twenty-eight, on the left."

It was enough. Reaching the third landing she flew along the narrow hall with an unerring maternal instinct. She quickly discovered the number.

Without pausing announcing or asking, she essayed the entrance. Some one from within shot the bolt forward into its socket, just as her hand touched the knob. She heard it.

Not hesitating a moment, she drew back across the hall, then flung the whole quick momentum of her body against the panels; and Number Twenty-eight crashed inward, broken and borne from its fastenings. She quickly dashed in after.

As she sprung thus into the room, Burle was discovered retreating hastily backward, as though to avoid a blow from the impelled door.

Recovering and repressing herself, she looked at him. There was an inflexible manifesto in her face, and notice of direful determination in her regard. For the briefest moment she contemplated him; and oh, how her whole soul abhorred this fellow!

Burle was taken wholly without warning. It was just at *this time*, as appointed, that he was expecting *Jip and Slushy*, and he was at the window, watching

for them. Jane's flight had alarmed him, and he hadn't dared insist on Connie's leaving the baby. Suddenly he heard the clatter of the cart: then a halt. Next he saw Isabel dart around the corner, speed along the walk, and enter the building. Always anticipating and arranging against the disclosure of inculpating situations, he had, after a moment's consideration, left the window, gone to the door, and as a precaution, locked it, just as her hand fell upon the knob.

But locks and bars avail not against love; and now one of its noblest types stood before him, the disabled door in the back-ground.

He contemplated all this in stupid amazement. Then his eyes settled upon the broken bolt. A part of the displaced iron was hanging from a half torn-out screw, and it yet tinkled against the shattered lock. A glowering menace grew upon his face, and he commenced to speak:

"This is rath—" But she advanced nearer upon him, and interrupting, demanded sternly,

"Where is the child?"

"What child?"

She approached even closer, and he fell back before her.

"The baby: *my* baby, that you stole in Washington Park. Take me to her—*instantly*."

"I never——"

"Don't tell me a falsehood;" and her pale face began to flush, her eyes to flash a deeper fire.

A reaction established now over Burle. The first blunt shock of surprise over, he began to get thoroughly angry. Here was likely to be a disastrous ending of his and Jowl's mercenary plans. His fears also excited and urged on his temper. Fairly cornered, he

grew hot and exasperated. Bristling up and taking a step forward in a bullying manner, he found voice and courage to bawl gruffly at her,

"Get out! Get *out*—I tell you!"

"My baby!" she remonstrated; and this time appealingly.

"Ther's no baby here, you lunatic; and you won't get any;" and he brutally grasped her shoulder and attempted to eject her from the room.

She retreated and shook loose from his hold, pathetically bewailing, "And you won't give her to me?"

"No!" in a grating teeth-set determined way. "Get out o' here you hell-wench, or I'll fling you into the hall:" and again he savagely clutched and gave her a jostling shove toward the door.

She recovered from the rude push and looked distractedly about the room in direful desperation. Her features took on a fearfully wrought expression of determination. They settled into an appearance of such ferocity of purpose as was terrible to witness in a gentle woman. Verily, she was no longer a woman, but an infuriated tigress, who gathered to fight for her young.

The wood-box, whereon poor Jane had often been obliged to sit in penance, now caught her eye; and therein, also, a long old-fashioned octagonal steel fire-poker; one of the kind long years ago used about log fire-places. It would be a terrible weapon in strong hands, urged on by a will aflame with delirium. Fully a yard in length it was, and with sharp cruel edges: thick and heavy at the lower, and tapering toward the upper end, which was hand-stopped by a large round knob.

Burle comprehended in a moment, when he saw her *es fall upon it*, and he edged in a direction to inte

SHE SPRANG AT HIM WITH THE RAVING FRENZY OF A ROBBED LIONESS. (Page 88.)

cept. But darting past him she caught it up. With both hands she swung it above her head, and she rushed upon him.

No capability of relation, be it never so graphic, could portray the amazedness of the scene which followed; nor the swift-smiting furiousness of the thunderbolt that now delivered upon this deserving ruffian.

She sprang at him with the raving frenzy of a robbed lioness. She pressed upon him. Though he fled the terrible onset, she pursued. In vain he sought to defend against the down-swinging crush of the blows inflicted in rapid succession. She bore him staggering before her as a stick is whirled and tossed of a tornado. She beat him down: blow upon blow: his head, his uplifted hands, his shoulders, his face. In the utter insanity of the moments, she wielded her weapon with the wild force of a maniac; until he sank broken, maimed, bleeding and insensible, upon the floor before her. Then in her frantic fury she stamped upon him. She ground the heels of her boots into the mangled flesh of his puffy face, and even stooped to tear the hair from his head.

Suddenly desisting from this awful chastisement, she flung the weapon from her and sped swiftly about the room. She snatched hastily at every article that might possibly conceal her baby. She flung the covering from the bed: she threw open the sink-cupboard door: overturned the table.

Soon she came to the wardrobe, and seizing its door handle, she made as if to wrench *that* open.

As often it had done before, the solemn mask yielded and swung noiselessly forward. For a first second she *was halted*—bewildered. But in the next, discovering *the opened way*, she darted through it.

Ah, then it was that she was transformed from the insanity of her fury. Then it was that the frantic strength forsook her, and weaving limbs grew too weak for support. She was just able to totter forward, stretch her arms and cry out,

"O Connie! O Connie! For the love of God! Quick! Give her to me."

For there, cowering in a corner, his arms wound about baby Crissie, crouched the terrified boy: and his frightened face had looked up with a despairing expression, as she had sprung in through the opening.

But its lines speedily changed to those of joyful reassurance, when the quick recognition followed. He hastened and met her outstretched arms with the baby. She hugged the child to her bosom; then waveringly sought and dropped into the wide-armed "sick-chair." She sank far back, and the great tears forced out from her closed eyes, following fast down her white cheeks.

Recovering soon, she regarded her repossessed treasure with a feverish eagerness. She held the languid unresponsive little weakling the length of her arms away from her, and with a sinking heart she looked into its wasted face.

A dismaying doubt seemed now to alarm her; but in another moment, with recalled remembrance, she tremblingly examined the child's ears.

The uncertainty was gone. They *were* there! Two tiny India-ink stars! It was indeed none other than her darling Crissie that she held recovered; but oh, how sadly stricken, changed and worn! She caught up a shawl near her and hid the child once more upon her breast, slowly rocking herself back and forth, and softly crying over it.

O mother heart! Is then thy dreary watch, thy weary waiting, over!

Again she held the child from her; and again pressed it back to her bosom. Her tears fell fast upon its pale worn face. One thin weak baby hand she tremblingly raised and pressed to her lips: then also the other: and now she folds them both against her breast and softly weeps and breathlessly joys over the languid wondering baby. "Dear Jesus, I thank Thee!" and her wet streaming eyes were lifted upward. "God, Thou art merciful—at last!" and she sank forward upon her knees on the floor, and with the child still clasped close, offered up a devout thanksgiving.

And all the while Connie was looking on; wondering, sympathizing, ever bating his breath in accord with her solemn joy; for her words and moods were responded by him. All the time, too, he was exulting—oh, so gladly!

Burle stood—or more literally, "lay"—very much in need of an ambulance surgeon. Connie rose up and took one hurried startled reconnoisance; he noted the bloody silent mutilated form as it lay stretched upon the floor in the next room. Then he hastened back, cowering close to Mrs. Clifford's side, appalled at what had taken place. His quaking senses could not comprehend it. Now and again his eyes, full of curious consternation, sought Mrs. Clifford's. She did not notice him. Her whole being, transformed back into gentleness by the fervid quick-thrilling glow of maternal repossession, was intent upon her child.

Next came a noisy clatter upon the stairs; the hurrying of many feet along the hall. The wave of surprise which swept up behind Fury's flying hoofs, was shuffling as fast as possible after.

It seemed to pause a moment upon reaching the shattered door of Twenty-eight. It looked in. Then with a horrified check it shudderingly recoiled; for there upon its back, with blood in rivulets upon the floor, the mutilated face directed upward, was stretched the battered and bleeding form of a man, stark and motionless!

Is this murder!

Now come the officers. They drive back the morbid curiosity hunters, and themselves take possession. They gather about. Stooping down over the silent prostrate form of Cluff Burle, with cautious fingers they raise an eyelid. They place their hands over his heart; and after silently waiting they pronounce, one to another, in whispers— "Yes: still alive."

Then one turned back to dispatch an ambulance call, and others pressed further on, through the mask opening, and into the room beyond. There they beheld, close upon the skirt of a horrible tragedy, a mother rocking an infant. She looked up with a gleam of mistrust in her eyes; but this instantly disappeared and they softened again as she turned back solicitously to her baby.

They were astonished at this picture of quiet domestic concern, so composedly pursued close adjacent upon an awful, and evidently a recent death struggle. Verily, the passage between the rooms was not even closed! And too, this woman was very beautiful! She was richly habited! No such tenant belonged to Island Number Ten!

While all this was dumfounding, even to police officers, they nevertheless pressed with the paramount duty of inquest.

"*Who did it?* Where is he?" Thus the advance

ing officer, as he eagerly interrogated this placid woman.

Returning his look, but not noticing his inquiry, she answered in a whisper, cautioning and motioning "quiet" also with her hand,

"Hush! You'll wake my baby."

The questioning officer's eyes, thus directed, now fell upon the child. He approached closer and spoke lower, as one might who humored a harmless whim, but nevertheless persisted in the discharge of a duty.

"Who did it?"

"I did it;" she answered gravely.

No one believed her. Then they questioned the boy.

Keen and quick, and now reassured, he warily answered, "I don't know. I was locked in this room. I saw nothing of it." But he was forming his conclusion. It was that Isabel had been attended by some powerful limbed champion, who, after assaulting Burle to make a way for the mother, had then discreetly stolen off to avoid arrest. He reasoned further that his Sunday-school teacher, whom now for the first time he knew as the mother of his little sweetheart, had affirmed to the act, simply as a diversion in favor of this stalwart friend.

The officers insisted further. They took the boy to one side. Motioning toward Isabel, they whispered him,

"Was she in here with you when the fight was on?"

Isabel's ear caught the question. She turned her face toward Connie, waiting his answer. Without a moment's hesitation he replied,

"Yes: we was both in here with the baby—together, —*and all* alone."

At this, his Sunday-school teacher's eyes deepened into a look toward Connie of questioning surprise.

"How came the door—this place—open?"

"I pushed it open," the boy still answered, "after the noise of the fight was over, to see how much any one might be hurt."

Isabel now comprehended. She called Connie to her chair. She disengaged and put one arm around his shoulders and drawing him close to her she kissed him.

"Dear Connie, it is because you love me that you are telling these falsehoods: they are with kind but mistaken intent." Then lifting her face and once more addressing Connie's interrogator, "Do not press the child into untruths. I alone am responsible. I struck down the wretched man. He kept me from my child. He even assaulted and attempted to force me from the room."

They looked upon her in silent amazement. Evidently she was crazy! Or perhaps *they* also formed opinion similar to Connie's. That she could have borne down, in this terrible wise, so powerful an adversary, showing not even a scratch and hardly a disordered attire herself, was simply incredible.

But next upon the scene appeared Dr. Jourdan. He had forced a passage: through the packed crowd in the hallways; by the guard at the outer door; past the insensible body; and now, very much perturbed and out of breath, he stood within the room. When his eyes fell upon Isabel, taking in the whole as intelligently as though he had been witness to it all, he exclaimed,

"Great heavens, who would have thought it!"

"Thought what?" demanded the examining officer, now in *turn of him.*

"*That she could* have administered such awful

punishment to that miserable fellow;" answered the doctor, pointing through the opening and toward the body.

"And do *you* think that she did it?'

"Don't she——" But here the doctor stopped in some confusion.

"Yes;" confirmed the officer, understanding his halt; "she *says* that she did."

"Then you may be sure of it:" the physician emphatically confirmed. He had no desire though, at that time, to enter into explanations.

This report of the affair was very doubtingly accepted by the astonished policemen. They however took her name and address; and afterwards, knowing him very well, consented her custody to Dr. Jourdan.

Upon this the doctor moved toward Isabel. She arose with her baby and met him, going close to his side. She looked up into his face, and she said to him, though haltingly, and with incoherence,

"My dear friend, I know it all now. Why you wished the promise; and why you desired to be near me, in that you perceived so well what was coming. Also what you and Jip had planned to accomplish, and how soon it would all successfully have ended, even without me. You are good: I thank you both. But when the amazing disclosure came, you had not returned; and how could I wait?

"You must forgive me;" she persuaded. "I forestalled you, but still I want your help. Darling baby sadly needs you."

We know very well what assurance he was likely to *give in* response. We know very well how tenderly he *took charge* of this woman and her baby Crissie. We *know very* well how gladly he included Connie at her

request; and with what solicitude he guided her in their return: avoiding Burle's body; along the hall; down the stairs; through the eager and staring crowd, all agape: and finally to the double seated wagon in which Letty was so anxiously waiting.

Dear little Letty! Her joyful tears overflowed anew.

Then Isabel, baby, and the nurse-maid were carefully disposed in this larger conveyance; and Jip in front, with Connie beside him, was entrusted as driver.

Dr. Jourdan himself took the more mettlesome Fury, and drove back in advance to Washington Avenue, the sooner to quiet the anxiety of the household, and to prepare also the people and the home for the joyful reception of the mother and her recovered treasure.

Half an hour afterwards, Burle, limp and utterly helpless, but partially recovered through the offices of the surgeon, was laid upon a stretcher; carried down and placed in an ambulance; and thence removed to the Long Island College Hospital.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TRUTH DRIVEN "HOME."

The doctor defines his position: also, an interesting but rather disconcerting retrospect from Jane.

JANE and Connie were in a tremulous and exultant state of happiness over their deliverance from Burle's *animal control.*

here were some carping dissonants, who censor

ously insisted that "this woman could have left such a man at any time;" and they disapprovingly insisted that Jane was "culpable for not, long years ago, abjuring relations that were shameful to her, corrupting to her son, and scandalizing to her family."

We will not defend against the accusation. But, now that she *had* escaped this disgraceful thraldom, Isabel's great heart overlooked the past, and Isabel's forgiving charity stood ready to offer the fleeing creature a "city of temporary refuge."

Let God alone judge Jane Stanhope! An unfortunate childhood environment, followed in early womanhood by strange complexities of untoward circumstance; this drift of early influences had carried her into devious and crooked channels. Neither by nature or inclination was she a bad woman. It was only that, once caught in the net, a stronger will than hers dominated, detaining her; until finally the centrifugal impulse of exasperated desperation fairly threw her out of and beyond it.

Shaken, sail-torn, straining in a buffeting sea, she at last caught glimpse of an opening, and of promised calm beyond. As a final hope, and with a last desperate endeavor she had struggled toward the harbor. Isabel Clifford was not the woman to meet this dismantled life at the haven's entrance, and, finding that the barnacles of an ill-spent past encumbered, repulse it. It was an evil mischance, truly, thus to be caught abroad in tempestuous weather. Much harm had been wrought; and now the drooping equipment of sail and cordage certainly fell below the prescribed standard. But, *should* her sisters, for this reason, turn the crippled *barque* back upon the boisterous element from which it *sought* escape!

Isabel Clifford held forth a hand to Jane. She made temporary resort within the shelter of her own nook of security, and bade this exhausted creature take new heart and holy resolve for the future. Concerning any judgment of censure, or any imposition of penance, she interposed no officious assuming between this woman and her God.

Meantime Dr. Jourdan was doing his part. He had sought out Jane's brothers; and it was through his kindly intervention that, as soon as she was recovered from her prostration, Jane was to return to their care. Pending this recovery, Isabel was content, nay glad, to hold the rescued wanderer within the cordial enclosure of her own protection.

Frequently now, they had long conversations together. They talked about the struggles of the poor; the state of want which is so common a habit with them: their characteristic incapacity; the habitual waste that, too often, is a feature of their unmethodical management; of worthiness and unworthiness among them; of honest appeal and of subterfuging pretension. These conditions impressed Isabel as important of intelligent understanding by people of means, who are the ones usually approached for aid. With knowledge in the premises, could they not the more judiciously respond when appealed to?

Connie sometimes came in during these recountings: often holding little Crissie in his arms. The boy was devoted, as ever, to his little sweetheart. Already she was springing forward in recuperative recovery, and Connie's heart grew lighter as the roses in her cheeks promised nearer return.

Raising herself with difficulty, one morning, for she *confined by* exhaustion to her couch, Jane looke

at the child; then at the mother; and with a deep sigh she said, "If I could have realized, upon that day in Washington Park, what I was aiding to accomplish, rather than see its consummation, I would have prayed for God's interposition against us."

Isabel disliked to hear Jane charge herself so severely, and she hastened to reply; "But you did not; you did not: and don't think of it now. Look at the marks you yet bear upon your face! Were they not received in defence of the little one? If you had been bad at heart, or had even passively acquiesced in this man's cruel dictation, surely my darling would have died. Her drooping was from confinement, rather, and the fetid air. These influences you could not control."

"You are sweet and good to say so;" replied Jane. "And truly, I did not follow his cruel directions. But sometimes he himself would give the child debilitating mixtures, when I was away. But with the little dove in my arms, almost a murderous feeling would come against him, when he urged what he called his 'working down process'."

Connie asked what would now be done with Burle.

"I don't know;" replied Mrs. Clifford. "Doctor Jourdan, though, is very firm in the matter, and I suspect that the creature will have a touch of another kind of 'working down process;' perhaps in the State's Prison. He is already in Raymond street jail, awaiting trial for abduction."

Thus reminded, Jane said, "How well I remember the frowning look of disapproval impressed by that jail, *as we* passed it that unfortunate morning! It was *down* Raymond street that we hurried with little Crissie."

"God's ways are mysterious;" returned Isabel. "It was one of the steps in His method to reclaim you and save Connie. I shall never think but that it was for the best." Then, with her mind on the coming trial she asked, "Would you be willing to testify against that man?"

"I must not refuse;" Jane answered. Then she timidly suggested, "Would you be willing to accompany me to the court?"

"I expect to do so, be assured;" Isabel replied. "You shall not go from my care, and I had almost said, from my sight, until I restore you to your brothers."

Letty came at this moment, into the room, and blushingly petitioned: "Please ma'am, Jip wants to know, may I go out with him a couple of hours this afternoon?"

"'Jip the detective'?" Mrs. Clifford laughingly suggested.

"Yes ma'am;" answered Letty; obediently accepting the cognomination.

"Yes; you may go: but beware Letty of his arts;" Mrs. Clifford smilingly admonished.

"Yes ma'am;" Letty again as duteously acquiesced. And then she tripped gaily away to yield herself a willing subject to Jip's most dangerous faculty; his love making.

But Jip had earned the privilege, and who now should say him nay!

And thus the happy custom of the once-more happy household, as the hours of each day passed; and Jane, kneeling at her bedside at night, weak, and as she knew, surely failing, thanked God for more sunshine than *the gloomy aggregate* of all the past years had brought *to her.*

One evening Mr. and Mrs. Credulo and the Rev. Doctor McVeigh dropped informally in. Not anticipating the call, Mrs. Stanhope had been assisted to a lounge in the drawing-room adjoining the library. Dr. Jourdan came soon after, and the conversation, without any premeditation on the part of any one, took a very interesting turn.

Addressing the clergyman, Dr. Jourdan said, "Have you forgotten the tilt that we ran, Doctor, on the evening of the musicale, last June?"

Doctor McVeigh was a very distant man in demeanor, and he inclined not kindly to jocular sociability. He looked reprovingly in the physician's direction, pushed out his lower lip, wrinkled his forehead and made answer,

"The matter of that discussion was of too serious a nature, now to be referred to in the nomenclature of a gala tourney."

But Dr. Jourdan's good humor did not droop under this sombre diction. We might whisper, as touching things *to be asked for*, that he was beginning to entertain a most joyful hope concerning another kind of importunity. He expected, himself, to become a mendicant for—a heart. He had not yet ventured the fateful solicitation, but his petitioning mood was begging hard for early opportunity.

"Oh well," he replied, half in soliloquy and half as addressed to Doctor McVeigh, "I have thought much upon the subject of that conversation. My experiences seem to confirm my position."

Perhaps there was a challenge conveyed in this. But *the good* minister affected not so to interpret it. At *all events* he would not accept it. Possibly he re-

membered his former discomfiture. He straightened back in his chair, and oracularly rejoined,

"You are a young man. Your views are not thoroughly settled. They will probably change."

Dr. Jourdan hoped——"Yes," if they were wrong; "No," if they were right.

"Believing that your first clause covers the situation," Doctor McVeigh returned, "I certainly concur with you in such a hope."

Mr. Credulo grew nervous. He saw a conflict impending, and he did not favor it. As a diversion he suggested a stroll among the flowers, adding, "I see that the ladies are engaged in some discussion of their own. They won't miss us, and I am hankering for my after-dinner cigar?"

"Then you must be a '*Hanker*-Hunker'." laughed the doctor, accompanying him. "I understand from my father that you were one of the prominent leaders of the old New York State 'Hunker' faction."

"Yes," chatted the good old gentleman gleefully, "I've had many a political battle with the old 'Barn-Burners.' Take a cigar."

By this time they were sauntering through the spacious conservatory. The clergyman, however, had excused himself, preferring a seat and a book in the library. Mr. Credulo availed of the opportunity, as they strolled by themselves, to say to Dr. Jourdan,

"Sorry you and the pastor don't agree in your missionary views about the poor."

"Well, I want to convert him;" humorously returned the doctor.

This way of stating it seemed antipathous. "Why, *he ought to be the* one to *convert* you!" remonstrated *Mr. Credulo.*

"I know; but if *he* is in the wrong, and I am right; how then?" submitted Dr. Jourdan.

"Yes, '*if*';" conditionally acquiesced the old gentleman. "I confess though, what you said that evening at the musicale, did rattle me. I thought it rather balked our good friend, too. I've bothered considerably over it since."

The doctor looked up interestedly. He was always on the alert to drive a nail where he thought alterations or repairs needed. An opportunity now offered, and he seized the metaphorical hammer.

"You spoke a moment since about my 'missionary' views. I believe that I have a mission. Perhaps then, in that sense, I'm a missionary; and, if so, that mission certainly pertains to the condition of the poor, since their improvement interests and engages me more than any other missionary work. I include, as a relevant obligation, my duties to the pretended poor: those who simulate mock distress for purposes of gain."

"Yes—*yes*;" answered Mr. Credulo, "*they* are the creatures who demoralize *me*. Their cheating ways kick the underpinning from a man's kindest intentions. I declare, I've begun to look suspiciously on good and bad alike! My wife, she's been bamboozled so many times, that I daren't trust her abroad in a tenement house with a ten dollar bill. They've spotted her, and they just go for it. Don't care about the money, but—you know—one don't like to have forced assessments levied for bad purposes. They work on her sympathies, and she comes home and tells about '*another deposit* in the Lord's Treasury.' Perhaps I write to Grey, and he *sends* me a report. Then I find that instead, she's *been contributing* to 'The devil's exchequer'."

"Yes, they're a '*bad lot*':" tersely quoted the doc

tor. "Of all forms of debasement which missionary effort is enlisted to reform, I do think that the degradation of a shameless life of imposture, sharpened for prey upon the gentle attributes of sympathy and mercy, is about the most hopeless.

"Such a life kills every finer sense. It hardens into brutality. It makes a charnel chamber of the heart. It blights into withered death every moral sentiment, and scorches natural ties and honest obligations into the blackened crisp of selfish viciousness. I don't wonder that you protest against it.

"There is a woman in yonder room," he continued, lowering his voice, "who can bitterly confirm what I say. Your wife knows her story. It would tingle the blood of the most sluggish apathist to listen to the account of what this practice has inflicted upon her, its unwilling agent."

"Thank God!" earnestly ejaculated the good old gentleman in response, "she's quit of it at last."

"I'm heartily with you in *that* thanksgiving;" acquiesced Dr. Jourdan. Then, after a little, "You won't consider me personally obtrusive Mr. Credulo, in what I may say?"

"Why, of course not;" that gentleman returned with a long whiff from his cigar, and an inquiring look.

"Because," continued the doctor, "your benefactions have been so widespread, albeit well-intentioned, that—Well," he finally summed up, at a loss for a better method of expressing himself, "what one says in a general conversational way is not intended—you know—as an application offensively pointed."

He put this inquiringly, deferentially, and withal in a smiling conciliatory way, for Mr. Credulo was greatly esteemed by him.

"I don't know how you're coming," replied the good man pushing his palm perplexedly over his bald head, "but you needn't be afraid. I sha'n't deny the score if it's honest. I've known you from a youngster up, and you've always been respectful to your elders."

"Whatever I say," earnestly insisted the doctor, "be assured, is not applied personally; but intended, of general application. I say so, and apologize in advance, because my friends tell me, that when upon this subject I'm given to implying a fit for the second person. But anything like personal disparagement is farthest from my thought. Let's agree, however, that I be understood as addressing the indefinite third person."

"Yes, certainly;" consented Mr. Credulo. He was interested, however, and urged, "But go on."

Dr. Jourdan took out his memorandum book. From between its leaves he produced a clipping from a newspaper. "A writer on this topic in one of our daily journals," he explained, "has evidently thought much on this subject; and I submit that his treatment of it, merits consideration. He has written several articles lately, and this is what he says in one of them."

> "'The wealthy man who doles out to the poor *with thoughtless indiscrim ination*, is an agent analagous in accountability to one who deals out demoralization from behind a bar'."

"Strong language, that; isn't it Doctor?"

"The writer seems himself to imagine that it might so be interpreted," replied the young man looking up for a moment from the paper, "for he modifies,"

> "'I'll qualify by abating the re-

sponsibility account of the rich man, in proportion only as his careless blindness *obscures* a sensible perception. But I will say, supposing his intelligent understanding to have been advised of the demoralization spread by lavish beneficence, that his *subsequent* measure of accountability, in so far as he continues, is not inaptly likened to that man's who disseminates moral deflection over a whiskey counter'."

his reading:

"'I say this, after long, careful and thoughtful consideration upon the matter of general alms-giving: Every ounce of unearned subsistance, whether bestowed in behalf of the good, or misbestowed upon the bad, is an applied ounce of demoralization, saving and excepting as disbursed to such as are becalmed by age, accident, or disease, into a permanent condition of disability'."

then cut off all relief?" expostulated

ied the doctor, "for he goes on to say:"

"'I don't contend that suffering should go unrelieved, because it happens unfortunately that succor tends to soften the muscles of healthy effort; but I wish to emphasize that

all relief is applied *under a risk* to the recipient'."

; and you oughtn't. If you don't; but

nically commented Mr. Credulo. "What us do?"

i;" pursued the doctor, returning to his

"'An unearned "money" or "material" bestowal to a poor man in distress, is attended with a hazard not unlike that taken when there must be an application of alcoholic stimulants to tide over a physical disability. But, notwithstanding the man may subsequently become a drunkard, through a taste and an appetite first acquired from stimulants administered during a critical period of illness, society does not argue, therefore, that physicians should never prescribe brandy for a sick patient.

Neither would I contend, because some men predisposed to laziness, subsequently become able-bodied paupers, through an experience at some unfortunate period when, if they hadn't been gratuitously fed, they would have starved, *that therefore no one should give relief.*

What I do desire to impress is, that our social polity should so be ordered, that when the physician ceased to prescribe the stimulant, the recov-

ered patient should not then be invited at every corner to continue as a hurtful indulgence, what had been terminated as a necessary succor. And, to apply the parallel, I would also insist that our Relief Rescue, in all cases *where personal knowledge did not enable to intelligent personal bestowal*, be intrusted to the care of experienced almoners, who should act as physicians to Pauperism; with the understood responsibility of terminating the sustaining dole, whenever a point should be reached where the patient could adequately resume his own support. ☞ And, at this juncture, that unthoughtful, though good-intentioned people, should be restrained from pushing the subject over into a condition of confirmed pauperism, *by continuing a gratuity, no longer a necessity*'."

The young man folded the paper and replaced it in his book. "Now there you have the parallel. Don't you think that as an analogism it is logical and legitimate?"

"I wouldn't undertake to *deny*, if you propose to contend *for* it;" humorously responded the old gentleman, his eyes twinkling. "The younger blood in this day and generation seems to have overturned our old-time notions about Charity. But who wrote the article?"

"Mr. Grey wrote it;" the doctor answered. "But *he don't attack the* old-time gospel of alms. He calls

attention to new conditions, and insists that the aforetime simplicity, which made no distinction, is not the best plan for the present. He points out also a safer method of relief. Don't you admit the force of his reasoning?"

"Surely," acquiesced Mr. Credulo, "it does seem a sound doctrine. Certain it is that I'm sore enough over some things to which my eyes have lately been opened, to subscribe to whatever promises a remedy. I wish you'd let my wife read that extract."

The doctor eagerly handed it to his friend, commenting as he did so, "If men would not present themselves, willing to be ruined by rum and redundant charity, we should have no drunkards and no able paupers. Because they do, let us seek to control practice, which, either through an ignorant passive, or in a careless active sense, may be enabling to their demoralization."

"I suspect," banteringly ventured Mr. Credulo, "that you are a *subsidy* prohibitionist."

"Well, perhaps so;" returned Dr. Jourdan. "I certainly would prohibit reckless subsidy.

"Some of our friends object that this methodizing of relief work, tends to lower, cramp, and angularize the graceful and poetic sentiment of true charity. They will tell you that Christ sanctioned giving unto the wayside beggar without any reference of his appeal *to an organization for investigation.*

"Such endeavored sarcasm is flippant and misleading. The petitioner to whom Christ commanded alms, was not able to earn the penny for himself. He was maimed, a cripple, or otherwise incapacitated. Because society had not then progressed to a point which *made* organized provision for him, he was, of necessity, *dependent* upon an unorganized charity. But society

to-day, has erected noble institutions all over the land, dedicated to the care of the wayside beggar of eighteen hundred years ago.

"Where is the individual who will contend that The Christ who said,

> 'They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;'

would directly or indirectly have bestowed alms into the hands of an able mendicant?

"It is a profanation of the names 'Charity' and 'Alms' to apply those terms to doles measured out by wealthy dupes to the designing knaves who have deluded them with false stories. Our streets and vestibules are too familiar to-day with mendicants, who are actively or passively engaged in the deceptive solicitation of such doles, in the wronged and insulted name of 'charity.'

"God forbid that one word of mine should interrupt a proper bestowal of alms! I only urge such precaution as would positively—or approximately—limit charity-bestowals to the worthy needy. Neither would I wish to be quoted as advocating a delegation of all charity to established organizations. Such a wholesale deprivation of the blessings attendant upon personal bestowal, would be monstrous. But I would insist, as a safeguard to society, that reference to some responsible agency be had in all cases *where the appeal comes from a stranger.* I know of no other practical way of restraining swindlers from this deplorable traffic in the nobler impulses of better people around them."

Thus the doctor enthusiastically discoursed, until their slow walk finally brought them around into the library, where sat the clergyman.

Mrs. Credulo, looking through the half-open portiere from the drawing-room, beheld them; and she noted that Dr. Jourdan's earnest address was directed to Doctor McVeigh.

Good soul! She was nervously apprehensive, and reflected to herself, "Now Doctor Jourdan is trying to draw our pastor into another controversy. It's all fol-de-rol;" she imparted to Isabel in a low tone; "They never would, and I fear they never *will* agree."

"But didn't your convictions side with Doctor Jourdan that evening?" Isabel inquired in return; referring to the incident of the musicale.

Mrs. Credulo drew a long sigh at this, as lamenting to herself, "And *she* too!"

"Well my dear," she proceeded nevertheless to answer, "I think that both might have been partly in the right;" and with this diplomatic disposition she turned to include Jane, who was reclining on her left, and to whom she sought to explain; "I must tell you Mrs. Stanhope, that Doctor McVeigh and our friend the physician had a very earnest discussion some time ago, in which—in which——"

As she gave evidence of having become hopelessly stalled, Isabel came to her aid, continuing, "In which medicine strove for METHOD in alms-giving, as against a clergyman contending for irresponsibility of bestowal."

Mrs. Credulo thought this "METHOD" of putting it, "just—just a little—severe; isn't it now, my dear?"

"My dear Mrs. Credulo," Isabel asked in reply, "may not one persuade with an earnest severity, when seek*to correct* a mischievous fallacy?"

As Mrs. Credulo's ideas were apt to be somewhat vague, and her efforts at expressing or fixing them,

sometimes wavering and desultory, she was disposed to decline discussion of ethical propositions.

But Jane had been listening, and under cover of the louder conversation of the gentlemen in the room adjoining, she timidly hoped to effect some good; therefore she took up the subject, in turn addressing Mrs. Credulo:

"I may speak freely with you, may I not, Mrs. Credulo; because you already know something of—something of——" Then she colored and hesitated.

"Yes indeed you may;" encouraged Mrs. Credulo heartily. She was a woman with a large heart, whatever we may say of her alms-giving indiscretions. "Tell me what you will. I'm sure, poor girl, that you've had bitter experience. I shall never forget where I found you, and——"

She was running on; but Jane had lightly raised a hand, and now she gently touched Mrs. Credulo's arm. Thus appealed to in silent protest, the good woman paused in her volubility, and looked inquiringly around at her companion.

Jane's face had flushed painfully, and a tear trembled on an eyelash. "Please don't." That was all. But the pathetic look of timid remonstrance spoke the rest; and if Mrs. Credulo's perceptivity was a little slow, her heart abundantly compensated. She did not pursue the reminiscence.

Soon Jane went on again, quite low in tone, for she was weak, but in such distinct audible enunciation as enabled both women easily to catch her words.

"We once knew——"

She paused, and there was another confusing tremor. Her *whole nature* repulsed at the recalling of *associations involving the* plural "we".

Her auditors affected not to notice this conscious humiliation, and after a moment she again essayed;

"We once knew the family of a man living in Sackett street. He was a master mason. He earned three and sometimes four dollars a day. He had a lovely wife and three sweet little children: two little girls and a boy.

"He fell one day from a ladder and broke his leg. It was many weeks before he could again use it, and meantime all their supplies were used up.

"He was bright and intelligent; an educated Protestant countryman from the North of Ireland. After exhausting their resources, and when absolute want stood confessed in the house, this man asked us for a small loan. Burle swore at him impatiently, and told him to write to some rich man.

"Well, he did so; and afterwards good people called upon the family. Very soon the Charity Society took up the case at their request; looked after the comfort of the man, and brought the family through their trouble.

"That was all very well.

"When he had now recovered and was again able to work, the Society's people told him that he should no longer look to them for aid, but depend in future upon himself.

"But he thought that he would use his friends, *just a little longer;* and accordingly he wrote importuning letters, saying that he was yet suffering; that the Society would not help him any longer, and asking, 'Please send me a couple of dollars'.

"A good many people sent him the 'couple of dollars'.

"Encouraged by this, he kept on asking. Finally

the little girls began to be sent out; sometimes with ten or a dozen letters which were variously directed to wealthy ladies and gentlemen about the city.

"Little Flossie, the prettier of the two, came home, I remember on one occasion, with eighteen dollars, which in all had variously been given her that afternoon by some twelve or fifteen wealthy people along the Heights, and to whom she had carried these begging letters.

"This unfortunate success, as you may imagine, so undermined the father, that he lost all pride in his trade. From this on, by reason of the debilitating ease which this lazy mode permitted, he grew more and more indolent. He ceased all efforts to find work, not even accepting it when offered.

"Worse than this: the disaffection spread to and demoralized his whole family: and to-day they are confirmed as among the worst and most successful of professional 'Rounders'."

"What a pity!" ejaculated Mrs. Credulo.

Isabel said nothing. From the look in Jane's eyes she quietly surmised a climax, and perhaps an application, yet to come.

"Yes indeed!" assented Jane, repeating Mrs. Credulo's exclamation: "What a pity!"

"Now," she continued again, "when the people along 'The Heights' received those letters, in which he stated as the reason for his personal appeal, that the Society had declined to assist him any more, what an excellent idea it would have been, had the recipients of the letters sought an explanation from the Society.

"Perhaps so;" musingly acquiesced Mrs. Credulo.

Jane pursued; "Even if they could not have spent *time to inquire* personally, could not they have re-

ferred his letters there, with the request that help be continued, unless some sufficient reason was reported for withholding it?"

"Yes, they could have done that;" acknowledged Mrs. Credulo.

"Don't you think that such an experienced Association as The Society of Organized Charity, would have had an intelligent opinion about such a case; especially after having carried it for two or three months?"

"Why, yes;" rather hesitatingly coincided Mrs. Credulo. She had taken no alarm however.

"I too, think," Jane went on, "that it would have been very wise and very prudent to have ascertained the reasons for this withholding of further aid. And I am sure that, had those reasons been inquired into, they would have been considered wise. Living in the same house with this family, I know that had those reasons been regarded, this man would then have immediately gone to work; as indeed he had opportunity, and as the Society intended him to do.

"Then he would have remained the honest and honorable man that he first was when misfortune overtook him: would have continued the good provider, the loving husband and father, and the respected citizen.

As it was, his careless friends proved most disastrous friends to him: for it was their thoughtless inconsiderate giving, that debased him and his whole family."

During the concluding sentences of this reminiscence, Mrs. Credulo began to manifest some signs of uneasy consciousness. She moved restlessly in her chair and *cast glances* the least bit apprehensive at Jane.

In conning over the mental list of her beneficiaries, *she* remembered having taken up one on "Sacket

street". Then it came further to her memory that he was "a mason." As retrospective thought carried her further and further back, she recalled also that "a broken leg" had been the original cause of his misfortune. Indeed she now recollected that her attention had been solicited to the case by the man himself, in exactly such a stereotyped letter as described by Jane. She did not like to remain in doubt. Summoning courage she faintly asked, "What was his name?"

Jane hesitated. It was not in her heart to give pain, even for a good purpose.

Isabel was watching her. She divined that the answer would disconcert Mrs. Credulo. But intent upon the upshot of such an excellent discourse, she caught a chance and signalled earnestly, "Yes; by all means;" and thus confirmed Jane gave the man's name.

A flushing color mounted quick and hot into Mrs. Credulo's face, but she said nothing; and courtesy forbade any notice of her very evident discomfiture.

She knew the case well. She had the family at that moment upon her list of private beneficiaries. This list was headed, "To be assisted delicately:" and she was allowing them a monthly dole of five dollars.

She remembered something more also, that caused her regretful disquiet. She *had* written to Mr. Grey, and in response received The Society's reasons for discontinuing further assistance: had been dissatisfied with and disregarded them: had gone to see the man in order to "prove the case to herself": had been persuaded by him; and then, by way of "wholesome reproof", had written Mr. Grey rather a saucy letter, in which she "just told him her mind".

And behold *now*, an *ex curia* representation of the *same matter, in* almost the exact phrase put by the

General Secretary, and with rationale and argument almost precise in statement and language as urged by him!

And that Jane Stanhope was right, Mrs. Credulo could not and did not doubt. This woman's sincerity and unusual intelligence, her terrible experiences in the same rut, saying nothing of her daily observation of this man while living in the same house with him; all this made any other conclusion impossible.

The doctor at this point sauntered through to the trio and asked pleasantly, "Having a quiet chat among yourselves? May I apply for admission to your conference?"

"I don't know;" replied Isabel archly. "Shall we trust him, Mrs. Credulo?"

"I rather dread him;" replied that lady under a sensitive remembrance of her late reminded indiscretions. "He is a merciless censor."

"We were discussing," pursued Isabel, "the unwisdom of unrestricted and too-abundant alms-giving."

"Now," protested Mrs. Credulo with comical perturbation, "I know he will become dangerous. He will 'go off'."

The doctor laughed but reassured her. "I suppose I am sometimes obtrusively persistent," he confessed, "on this topic. Mr. Grey, (who, by the way, is well known to Mrs. Credulo,) often deplores the existence of conditions spoken of by Mrs. Clifford. Cases of incidental temporary distress are often pampered into a well defined diathesis of confirmed pauperism, through the 'unwisdom' (your term is a good one, Mrs. Clifford: I *adopt it*;) of a lavish appliance of relief, at the miscellaneous hands of enthusiastic but judgment-lacking

sympathizers. Too many cooks, spoil the broth of reclaiming sustentation."

"I told you so;" confirmed Mrs. Credulo in humorous vein of mock trepidation, with perhaps, too, a large grain of real apprehension. "Touch him with that match, and off goes the magazine. One needs also a dictionary, to follow the—the lofty phraseological gyrations of his rockety soarings."

The doctor was a keen man. "I wonder," he queried mischievously, "if our fair neighbor isn't trying to divert from some conscious discomfiture of her own. What compunctious circumstance have you been recalling to her?" And he looked toward Isabel and Jane.

"Don't tell him;" pleaded the good woman, now in real alarm. And Isabel charitably declared for both,

"No, we *will not*."

Love will come,
Love will sway
With an influence soft
As a sunset ray.

And shall love be
With me, with thee,
As the *ever* green leaf
On the evergreen tree;
The snow-bound laurel,
The budding rose?

Yes; love hath come,
E'en now it glows.

Two white warm arms,
Face, full of charms;
Two lips, so clinging!
Two eyes, full brimming!
The same sweet song,
'Tis never too long:

I am wondering——I could wish——! My heart gropes for some vague something, in oppressed uncertain mood. Such mystic longing! Insinuate, but yet ambiguous!

Isabel was sitting in the seclusion of her own chamber. It was eleven o'clock at night, and the two hours just past had been spent with Dr. Jourdan, in the library.

The doctor, though returned to his home, was not in *his* chamber. Doctors seldom are! He was slowly pacing backward and forward in his office. He had, but a brief ten minutes before, bidden Isabel a very lingering and reluctant "good-night."

His reflections were more open. His philosophy drifted not afar in centrifugal poetical wanderings; in airy protesting circlings; holding coily distant and averting from a centre that he knew drew him. He carried straight at the heart-mark within, and avowed roundly, "I love that woman with my whole soul; and I *must* win her."

Still he kept his measured patrol, and his meditations went on again: "Those sweet thoughtful eyes, so frank to meet one's own! That lovely deleniation of profile, falling from her pure white forehead, down past the half opened lips: described yet further by the graceful chin: then hidden below the enchanting throat, in those bewildering throbbing promises beyond!

"And too, there have revealed to me, qualities of heart and soul, how rare in woman! In their exercise they have reopened the door of a lost heaven to an unfortunate sister. Oh, what sweet charity must that be

which can stoop, all unthinking of self, to bestow the rehabilitating pledge and raise an outcast! Nor does she hold such an one at the cold distance of formal forgiving tolerance. 'This above all has touched me. Notwithstanding the frown of social censure, she has not withheld to confirm this rescue by the continued bestowal of her gracious noble self!"

His spoken reverie sank almost to a whisper; his step grew slower—slower; and with the last words he paused, very still; and now he stands with bent head, and eyes fixed as in deep thought.

Could he win her? Should he hazard the asking? Dare he venture?

Not but that he *would* make the fateful solicitation at *some* time! Oh yes! His whole soul and life demanded. But was the time—now?

Knowing what you and I do, gentle reader, we could suggest to this wise man a heroic verbal formula of prescription, to be addressed to that certain ear, and which would at once restore courage and end all this halting perplexity. But as companions of honor in this *affaire d'amour*, we must be careful to discover to neither soliloquist, any knowledge as to the other, that has come to us—professionally. Therefore, while we look on and sympathize, and notwithstanding we are of opinion that two or three little words from us in the ear of this debating doctor, would open a happy way to a speedy settlement of all his doubt, yet this is one of those anomalous cases, where we must shut our eyes, remain inactive, and blindly *hope* that the complaint will cure itself. Judging from the safe and final *resolution* of similar *dubitation in suspenso*, as exam*pled in* analagous precedents, we may confidently antici*pate* an early determination in the case interesting us.

"Will you ride with me?" he asked of her the next morning.

Her eyes lighted up; "Do you mean on horseback?"

"Yes, if you so prefer."

"Do not you also?" she returned, uncertainly.

"*I* shall like best the way that *you* choose."

"Oh, then I choose the saddle;" she answered with enthusiasm. "Did you mean—Are we to go now?"

"No time could be better;" he answered. "The day is fresh and cool. We'll pass through Prospect Park, and then down the Boulevard to Coney Island."

"Yes;" she acquiesced heartily. Then with a little flush of hesitation,

"May I ride—Fury?"

"'May I'," he thought to himself. Why should her selection wait upon his consent? He looked into her face. Her eyes met his with a gentle waiting inquiry. "I wonder," he ventured, "why you defer to me about Fury?"

Then she wondered herself; or so persuaded *to* herself, in reflecting that perhaps this betrayal of a wish for approval was bold. But all the while she was inwardly pondering, "It is sweet to ask him; just as though—as though I ought, before deciding: as though I knew that his interest in me was his natural warrant of interdiction respecting anything that threatened danger; because—because——"

She sought to analyze no deeper. Such examinations usually tend to greater confusion the further they are pursued: and also, she put back the wish now to define and determine. It was a sweet tremulous anticipation, this dreamy, yet undetermined, "Will it be!" She *held the door* just a breadth ajar on the blushing com-

ing morning, but she was yet coy to open it wide and look forth.

But the doctor was not a man to loiter content upon the threshold of the intangible. His was a mind satisfied only in being able to feel his feet solidly on the bottom. He rested uneasy unless he could explore and fix sentiment as well as anatomy. This was a professional impulse, and if it needs any excuse, he must plead the habit of his education.

"Would you forego Fury, and jog along upon a steadier animal—if I asked it?"

"Yes."

She looked up, so true and honest! into his face; though she spoke the "Yes," quite softly. Then she hastened to add, lest her favorite be disparaged, "But really, Fury is steadier than any other animal that we have in the stable."

This was enigmatical. "I thought that he was the wildest."

"He is the grandest;" she amended with enthusiasm. "He is the truest footed. He never shies or jumps unexpectedly. He is ambitious and courageous; and though he paces at such tremendous rate when allowed, yet his carriage is as steady as—Well, I'm at a loss for a simile: say—an express train's."

"Then if I have no 'express train', how can I keep you in sight?"

There sometimes indented upon Isabel's blushing cheeks, two naughty signals that she could not control. At the first far-off hint of merry humor, instantly there indexed these dimpling twin tell-tales. Coy outward copies they were of inner winsomeness; and deeper *and* deeper they grew, as the mirthful mood fixed more *and* more. They danced and retreated, out and in, like

witching elves, to enchant and charm; until consciousness of their frolicsome disobedient assertion, would bring up the bashful sensitive flush; and then indeed she was irresistibly lovely.

Even so now, as the merry thought of running away and leaving the doctor disconsolately behind, presented to her. "Ah," she confusedly reassured, "but I will talk to him, and coax him to go slow."

"Lest he get ahead of my *slow coach?*"

Though she looked at him with a smile, in recognition of rather a tedious pleasantry, yet in the smile was just the faintest hint of a reproach. He could detect it, and quickly added,

"But I think I can find an animal in my stable, able to cut out for Fury quite as rapid a pace as *he* will care to keep."

"And will you race with me?" She brightened up excitedly.

"Yes: I'll give you as hard a contest as I can press my Black-Hawk into: and I warn you, he may set sharp work for Fury. His strain is a dangerous one to challenge."

"Oh, I'm so happy to expect it!" And so she was. Her eyes danced in anticipation, and she eagerly promised that she would "be ready to leave the stable in half an hour."

An hour from that time, having passed soberly through the streets, through the park, they had just emerged from overhanging foliage and were trotting out upon that long tree-arched stretch, The Ocean Parkway. Here they were privileged to race, and she looked a reminder of the doctor's challenge, at the

same time giving Fury a trifle more rein. Instantly he picked up, and commenced to urge forward.

Her companion easily kept beside Isabel. His animal was a superb one; a withy-limbed, muscular Black-Hawk. He measured sixteen hands at the shoulder. He had trotted low down into the "twenties," and the doctor quietly humored himself in the belief that he could leave the famous Fury behind.

"I hope," he sought to stipulate, "that you mean this a trotting contest." He disliked to demoralize his horse's training, in a running match.

"Yes;" she eagerly bowed. "Running—'no fair'. I'll keep Fury from breaking. But really," she added, "Fury himself prefers trotting; and I'm sure that I do.

"Now," she cautioned in anticipation, pointing ahead, "when we are abreast of that large elm on the left, that is to be the—'send off,' I think it is, that you call it?"

"Very well," complied the doctor; "we start from that tree. But don't press the race to any hazardous extremes."

"Oh no!" she assented, half absently; being intent meanwhile upon the starting point, and engaged also in gathering her reins well in hand.

Fury perked up anew. They were already trotting along smartly; but this firmer and shorter bridle grasp, surely meant a dash. He was all alive for it.

When the elm was reached she gave the word—"*Now!*" and both horses dashed away with continually increasing speed.

The wind was fresh, but at their backs; and this *favored* a lady's riding habit.

They have kept abreast for more than a quarter of a mile, and now it does seem as though they were both

at top speed; but faster! *faster!!* until both animals, still evenly together, are covering the ground at a tremendous rate.

Thus far the Black-Hawk has held his own with Fury. But he has little if any better time to show; and the doctor begins to think that he will be quite satisfied if he continues to keep his head even.

But look at Isabel! Is she not matchless? Her figure at this moment is a thrilling soul-stirring prototype of flying equestrianism! She sits her horse grandly, and as easily and confidently as though the saddle had been her cradle. The doctor, too, rides well. He has long been accustomed, and often makes his professional rounds upon his horse.

They were upon one of the equestrian side-ways, where racing is permitted. Many a carriage party from the centre roadway, seeing them coming, held up to witness the spirited dash: and many another, bewildered by their sudden shooting past, looked after them wonderingly as they flew by. Handkerchiefs enthusiastically waved by gentle hands, and sometimes a "Bravo! for the lady," from the vociferous lungs of some enthusiastic gentleman, greeted or followed them.

Half, then three-quarters of a mile, had quickly been covered, when she shouted across to him, "Try to lead me."

Then her companion urged; and his horse, in response, did draw ahead a very little: hardly a length though.

Then she laughed gaily forward to him, calling out again, "*Now*—is he doing his best?"

"I think that he is—quite;" the doctor returned.

"*Then good-bye*;" and she released the heavy pull

that she had kept on Fury's mouth and gave him an easier rein.

Instantly he shot forward into a flight that was phenomenal. It was a rate that covered a quarter of a mile in half a minute. But his mistress knew Fury well. He could not keep it long. His tremendous momentum would run him off his feet.

But the doctor was hopelessly left, far behind; and she soon drew hard again to check her way. "Good darling Fury!" she coaxed; and yielding to the voice that he loved so well, the animal was soon quietly walking, and the doctor caught up beside her.

"I can't understand it;" he said, shaking his head. "Why, you almost flung the rein on his neck, and yet he didn't break."

"And then," she joined in excitedly, "did you see his nose point straight ahead; and how splendidly he went? It's like, I imagine, sitting in the front of a flying locomotive, when he is rushing like that."

"I certainly saw his 'rush';" answered the discomfited doctor, good humoredly. His speed is fabulous. Does your father know his time?"

"I cannot give you Fury's record, exactly. I'm not 'up' in such technicals: but I've heard Dennis say, 'He's made better than Two-fifteen'."

"Indeed, I should think so!" exclaimed the doctor. "It *did* seem as though he was going quite down to two minutes."

"Yes; and so perhaps he was, at the last. But, dear old boy! That was too furious a pace to hold for a mile. He would break after a quarter, if I didn't *check him* again."

Her face was glowing; and in this flush of healthful excitement she was dazzlingly beautiful. Her hair,

that lovely glory of burnished gold, was in half-confusion, and thrown back from her face. She had withdrawn the glove from her right hand. Firm, shapely, white, it caressed Fury's neck; slowly stroking the glossy surface as she bent forward over his shoulders. Dr. Jourdan's eyes watched the motion, and how desperately did his heart covet the possession of that hand! She looked up at him with eyes sparkling, dancing, and she tried to say regretfully, but it came so archly and ingenuously,

"I was sorry to run away from you; but how could I resist the conquest!"

Yes, truly! She *had* made a conquest! A double conquest! If it had been a race for a heart she could not have been more positively pronounced winner, than did his eyes at that moment acknowledge to her.

After this they walked their horses, and finally the conversation led on until they found themselves talking about Jane: but not in mood censorious. Dr. Jourdan was interested to know more of this remarkable woman. "That face," he commented, "is certainly an impressive one. How immediately, too, her earlier gentle breeding is apparent, when one talks with her!"

"I am surprised," joined Isabel, "to find such depths of love in her heart. It is with sad regret that one reflects, what a noble life has been wrecked! Yes, she has a deep and a very affectionate nature. Many and many a time has she restrained an impulse to throw her arms around me. I know it. The wish has shown in her eyes, and——" Isabel hesitated a moment; her face flushed. Then as though chiding herself for an *unwomanly hesitation*, she bravely concluded her sentence, "*and I* have kissed her for it."

"You!"

"Why not?"

"Remembering what she has been?"

"Yes: but it has not harmed me; and I know that the token has strengthened her. She told me afterwards, that the kiss I gave her one evening as she was going to her room, so softened her heart, that at her bedside she essayed the first prayerful seeking of God that had gone up from her lips for fifteen long years. Ought not I to kiss her?"

The doctor looked at Isabel: or rather he looked her way. Her figure though at that moment was dim and uncertain from the misty obscurity which would, in spite of his effort to command it, come into his eyes.

Perhaps she noted this, for she showed some confusion.

"I didn't mean for you to infer that I thought it wrong in you, thus to solace that wretched creature's heart." Then after a pause he concluded; "You are a noble woman to bestow such a forgiving token, and I wish that I dared say, without curbing my words, what I think of you for it; and how I think you *myself*."

She was recovering from her shyness before he had added this, but now, the earnestness of his last words brought back a double abashment. Nevertheless, after silently walking slowly on a little distance further, she ventured,

"Why would *you* thank me?"

"I would thank you in the sacred names of *repentance* and *promise*, for the sweet charity that inspired the act. Because too, it examples your loving magnanimity and amiable gentleness of disposition: your brave independence also of frigid proprieties which prescribe

ceremonious line, beyond which, society stipulates that a virtuous woman shall not go to save a soul. You did yourself no harm in thus bestowing yourself. I tell you further," and now he was getting very warmly in earnest, "that you never before confessed to an impulse that so draws——"

But here he stopped rather abruptly, and in some confusion too: and this time she did not prompt him further. But her heart throbbed tumultuously; and nearer and nearer the centre of some enraptured perceptivity, circled a subtile, a dawning consciousness of passionate heart-hunger, never before, as now—stirred,

Two weeks have passed, and again we find the doctor engaged in a walking meditation. He is at his office. It is eight o'clock in the evening, and he has but just returned from a round of professional calls.

"'Yet more tender; more intense'."

These words he has this moment quoted to himself; and he continues in his own language;

"Every day lengthens into a dreary period of longing, and every hour is a despotism. How much longer shall this unsatisfied yearning remain a halting uncertainty? I *must* dare the decision. I am no coward. Nevertheless an undefined trepidation disturbs me. Not that I *fear* to ask, but that I would not, by asking too soon, jeopardize the chance of more certain favor through delay.

But this deferring is intolerable. My heart demands. I almost wish to risk refusal rather than wrestle further with this feverish unsettled uncertainty.

"*I will not* protract this endurance. Even my *patients notice*, and tell me that I am distraught. Pe

haps I am endangering lives; for how can I centre all my faculties in the sick chamber, when my whole soul waits elsewhere?"

He drew back the curtains and stood looking forth. The rain was pouring violently. The wet flags shone under the light of the street lamp. Sometimes an indistinct quick-moving outline would pass; and then he knew that some pedestrian, closely wrapped against the storm, was hurrying by. But to his feverish mind they seemed like silent shadows.

"Yes: shadows! I cannot longer be satisfied with them. Oh, if I was but now persuaded that I might dare! That I might hope to change a vague uncertainty into a rapturous reality!

"Does she not treat me with sweet kindness?" When I have looked into her eyes, and have known that my whole throbbing presence exposed and urged an asking that I could not conceal, has she then coldly sought to avoid me? I have not thought so.

"'My dear friend,' she called me, in her excited intensity, and after that awful passage when she found and fought for her child. What a hurricane of vehemence must have there been manifested! And what corresponding depth of love must she be capable of!

"All askings about her find comfort: all solicitations, responsive sympathy; save perhaps mine, which asks for—so much!"

He looked at his watch. Should he go at once? "Past eight! This rain too, will ensure my finding her alone. I cannot endure this wretchedness any *longer*! I must know within this hour——"

Breaking off abruptly, he closed the curtains and *walked* hastily toward the hall.

Jane and Isabel, in the latter's chamber, had been sitting together since the seven o'clock dinner. Mrs. Clifford had carried about her for the two weeks past a habit of unrest that Jane could not but observe. But inborn delicacy would not allow her to betray any notice of it. Especially was she careful not to do so, since she perceived the cause.

During this period a remarkable companionship had established between these women. The plummet of social scrupulosity does not appear to have deterred Isabel from cherishing an affection for this forlorn creature. She perceived in Jane rare qualities of head and heart. She understood that a very great wrong had been aided by her; but she remembered also that circumstances of impressing environment had seemed to coerce. She fully recognized now, in this woman, not only a repentance sincere, but such loathing of the past as threw her into the most painful confusion whenever a happening shadow of it chanced to return. Satisfied then of the sincerity of this woman's regeneracy, she withheld not the gracious recognition and comfort which her heart so pleadingly prompted in behalf of a sister, struggling back to honesty of purpose. Therefore, when with all this, she became aware that the tendrils of a yearning love were holding tremblingly toward her, she put her hands under them affectionately, and trained them where they so longed to cling. A woman's love for a woman, is a rare and precious thing!

The Saviour was kind to such an one; and when approached by her, His hand did not motion a repulse. More than this: He chided those of his officious followers who *criticised* her manner of proffered thankfulness. *He did not* deny even the sacred contact of H

Own Precious Person, when her trembling advances sought the blessed privilege.

Thus reasoned a noble woman, who confessed that when she perceived that tremulous asking in those sorrowful black eyes, she could not withdraw with polite ceremoniousness.

God repaid her: for in the weeks which came, there transpired events, which, to have looked back upon with a remembrance of kindness withheld, would have raised regretful recollection that would have accompanied Isabel through life.

Letty's knock: and then was handed in Dr. Jourdan's card. "P. T. O.," down upon one corner caught her eyes, and turning it in compliance, Isabel read this penciled message,

"I know that it is past the conventional hour, but will Mrs. Clifford kindly favor me?"

Turning to Jane:—"It is from the doctor!"

"Yes?" But Jane could have so inferred from the bright flush that mounted to Isabel's face.

"Shall I go down?"

The question was not a question in an asking sense. Its tone of voice sought no answer. Rather, it was a meditative overture for a little time in which to reflect and resolve. Perhaps also, a sweet subterfuge for the indulgence of a few delicious moments, in the palpitating flutter of conscious expectation.

A heavy quilt had been thrown over a large high-backed rocker, and wrapped in this, Jane reclined. A *pillow* was at her back, and her delicately shaped hands *rested* on the arms of her chair. She looked down at *Isabel* with that regardful interest which her sympa-

thetic heart prompted; and with it also, upon her face, the guise of a silent solicitude. But, withal, she was oppressed with such crushing realization of a near past, as caused her to guard, almost with terror, against any proffer from Isabel of confidence; lest a slightest acceptance should tarnish with the breath of that unhappy period, so sacred a secret as was Isabel's.

As though Jane had responded affirmatively to the question, the happy woman now continued, "Yes: of course I shall go down. But at first I was startled."

Isabel had been sitting upon a low hassock, leaning against Jane's side, her arms thrown affectionately across her lap: and as she thus decided she lifted her face.

Jane's only answer was to take that precious face in her hands, look lovingly a moment down into its deep brown eyes, and then bend her own head and lightly touch her lips to the golden hair which crowned the broad white forehead.

Isabel was in a tremor of sweet perturbation, and the kiss brought a film of moisture into her eyes.

Those loving eyes! May they never dim, from thoughts of him, save as they do, with pleasure now!

"I dare not whisper it to anyone," Isabel meditated, "but I know *now*, that it would kill me if he was unkind!" Then she looked up, as who should ask, "Have I betrayed myself?"

Very soon she arose, smoothed her hair, collected herself and descended to the parlor. Her step was light, and Dr. Jourdan did not perceive her entrance. He sat, bending forward, apparently in deep meditation; his elbow supported on one knee, and his hand *pressed across* his eyes. Not until the near rustle of

her dress caught his ears was he aware of her presence within the room.

Then withdrawing the hand quickly, she was discovered, standing close by his side. The hot flush mounted into his face. He arose hastily. She was holding out her hand.

She did not appear to notice his confusion. She herself was involved; for do we not know how subtile a quality of passionate emotion already lurked between these two?

She thrilled when his warm clasp, firm, but withal gentle, closed upon her hand. He dared hold it but one blissful moment, and then he waiting upon her to a seat.

He made no further motion afterwards. He did not seek one for himself, and it was her voice which first broke the silence: the awkwardness too; for at the moment, quite discomposed, he was standing, uncertainly, near her.

"Won't you be seated, Doctor?"

Simply spoken, and with a motion of her hand indicating a chair. But sweetly spoken too; and its rich low contralto was music to the doctor's ears; the sweetest, he thought, that ever in all his life he had heard in a human voice. In pondering this he forgot, or did not comprehend her invitation; and his temporarily respited confusion came suddenly back, in perceiving that this gentle woman was now regarding him with anxiety in her eyes. Furthermore came a sudden consciousness of the fact, that as yet, he had said—not —one—single—word!

"I really believe I'm not myself to-night;" he essayed in an unsteady tone. Whereupon her anxious look deepened.

"Oh, I'm perfectly well—*physically;*" he hastily assured, stumbling along uncertainly, in explanatory recognition of the look that had not escaped him; "but I—*but*——"

This "BUT" etymological, appeared quite as formidable as a "*butt*" material: for upon encountering it he stopped suddenly and contemplated it irresolutely, as one might some threatening appulse, unexpectedly starting up in the way.

And she, dear heart! commiserated his confusion; though there did just the pleading of a smile come an instant into her eyes. But her own heart, alike involved, was by no means quiet in its pulsations. She reproached the smile and fell to sympathizing.

The doctor needed sympathy. An able logician! A scientist! A scholar! A capable man in his dual profession of M. D., and D. S.: thoroughly in command of language and of languages, and never heretofore at a halt for phraseological medium! And now so hopelessly disconcerted by a little conjunction!

But!.

Certainly something very unusual must have occasioned, and again his companion looked up into his face, so frankly, and too so sweetly! Those deep thoughtful eyes! The arch fascination of those exquisitely curved lips! The clear lined brows! The delicately tinted oval checks! She lifted them all with gentle anxiousness. And with what kindly sympathy!

He forgot his confusion. It transformed into a bewildering intensity of attraction toward her; and with it came a yearning to catch this magnificent creature, quickly, impetuously, to his breast. His heart at that *moment leaped away* from doubt, and he recognized in *her whole mien*, that which stimulated to hopeful

happy certitude. But he controlled the impulse, for her—dear—sake. He would not put that confiding responsiveness to the shock of so premature a test. He even sought to withstand the fascinating allurement that on the instant had moved him, for he shaded his eyes from her as one shuts away the sun, though loving it. He commenced to pace up and down the room.

He had recovered, now, all his capacity of speech, and in a low suppressed tone he urged rapidly, vehemently,

"I cannot wait for any preliminary formalities of speech. I came to tell you something, which, while it remains untold, unsettles and holds me restless beyond my control. I *must* confide it, for it is possessing me with an intensity that—compels."

He continued to pace in short turns about and about, but always close to her.

"Weeks ago I was called to this house professionally; and I found you lying insensible."

"O Doctor!" she remonstrated, half rising, the remembrance of that frightful shock recalled. The earth in that dreadful instant had indeed been blotted away; and she, left drifting, sweeping, whirling. But she did not continue. It was only the uttered expostulation. She sank back again in her chair, with hands pressed to her face, as though to shut away that dismaying retrospect.

He had paused a moment upon her exclamation: then he resumed with rapid words, "I administered my utmost skill, and God helped—us both. You and me."

He stopped in his rapid utterence, and raised his face reverently.

"'Helped—us both';" she repeated, almost inaudibly; her hands yet covering her face.

"Yes, I thank Him;" pronounced the doctor, again

lifting his face. Then resuming once more, and as rapidly;

"You came back to consciousness. We all knew that this mental light revived to you—as it were upon the instant—the whole burden of an awful calamity. And, too, we had dreaded this returning realization; fearing that reawakened consciousness would only overwhelm and throw you further back again. But the trial came; and though your heart was racked, and every fibre, quivering, wrestled with new spasms of despair, yet your steadfast nature triumphed; and you clung by us in your right mind."

She put up one hand as though once more remonstrating, and again he paused. Many moments he thus stood, waiting upon her silent entreaty. Finally withdrawing her other hand, she raised upward her flushed face and expressed reverently,

"Oh no! Not *my* nature. Heart of mother *could* not! Don't say it! Only God kept me in those moments, from insanity."

"Then render to God the acknowledgment;" he acquiesced solemly. "Nevertheless, during that ordeal I looked on in amazement, and I reconized you in that passage of peril, as I had not known you before." She hid her face again, and he continued;

"During the succeeding days and weeks I saw you often; and though weighed down with wretchedness, ever on the tremulous edge of quivering solicitude, through it all you endured, with what must have been the tensest will power of suppression.

She looked up again as he paused, standing beside her; this time into his face: "Please don't;" she entreated, as though remonstrating again, that he attrib-

uted to her, a sustentation that she realized came only from the Highest Source. But yet he continued,

"I saw you in church; in your Sunday-school; among the poor: and I have seen you smile in effort at cheery sympathy, when I knew that your whole being was one great sob. And all this for others! A subordination of self, lest the black shadow attending *you*, should cloud another's sunshine."

She did not attempt longer to oppose the increasing ardor of his rehearsal. Drawing her chair close to the marble centre-table, and leaning there, she shaded her face with both hands upraised, listening silently.

"Then followed the visit of that wretched woman, whom most ladies in dainty society would have repulsed; but whom you, God love you for it! sought only to benefit. And after that I saw the awful passage, dared and fought, to reach your child; and where this same quality of fortitude, so gently expressed otherwise, was transformed with the occasion into overwhelming aggression. Indeed, this appalled me.

"But when, the emergency passed, and you were made a loving and a tender woman again by the joy of repossession, then it was that you spoke to me three precious words. Their memory and their tones, will linger and thrill to my dying day."

She looked up once more.

"Oh, you did not know how much those words were to my waiting wish; nor of the quick hope that they sent flushing over me! I have lived since, upon the expectation they half confirmed. I have carried them as the precious testament of a promise to come."

She hid her face again.

Then he approached, and bending over he stood close to her. He gently disengaged from her face, one hand,

and he took it in both of his. He raised and held it hard against his heart. It could feel the quickened throbbings there. It trembled too in the thrilling passion of that mutual moment. As he pressed it close, he besought with impassioned fervor:

"My precious darling! You called me then—your 'dear friend.' Will you not look up now, and give me that name again? Tell me, too, that I shall be your dearest friend—forever? I love you with a holy passion such as man gives but once, and to but one woman in all the wide world."

A few beating moments! She tried: and again she made the effort; but she could not answer him. She gently withdrew her hand. Rising she seemed to grope her way to the deep window near her. She threw the heavy hangings across her shoulders, and thus secluded, she pressed her hot forehead against the cold glass.

Oh, well she knew it! Long ago had mutual love asserted. The utterance now was but an obedience. She thought, and hesitated only in thinking, "How shall I tell him—all that I would! I have had loves! A daughter's; a sister's; a mother's. And I thought, too, that once I gave a true wifely devotion. *But what was it* to the mastering passion that I have for this man! He dominates my every pulse. I am reckless in my yearning for him. This world will be my heaven, when I can press unrestrained to his side. He is my all!"

"God forgive me!" she suddenly whispered, arresting herself.

Then she turned and looked out. He had thrown himself into the chair which, a moment before, she had left. *His arms* were stretched upon the table. *His face was buried* upon his arms.

She flew back to him: she stood by his side: she pressed her quick palm under his forehead: she raised his head; and with her arms about, in melting throbbing ardor she clasped his face close against her bosom. She could not meet his look—quite yet; but she bent and pressed her burning lips again and again to his forehead. He tried to speak; to rise; to take her in his arms. Her soft warm hand upon his lips detained him, and he could only clasp and press his kisses upon it.

Thus she stood, almost suffering in that imbued intensity of soul-fervency.

When she could control her voice, she raised his face toward hers. With both her bare white arms yet 'round his head, pressing it close against her throbbing breast, her whole soul's sweetest wishing in the eyes that thrilled their longing flame down into his, she whispered, with a fervor chaste and pure, "I—*love* you!"

She kissed his hair; again his forehead; and at last, with a thrilling quivering ardor, she joined her hot moist lips to his, in one burning—passionate—clinging pledge. It was a kiss such as a woman can give—*but once*. Love may glow and deepen with the passing years, but there is never but one such kiss. Its memory is a tingling ravishment. Its electric thrill symbolizes holiest promise. It is a sacred betrothal of souls, blent on that quickening instant of contact, into the dual one—of an eternity to come.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SILENT SHADOWS FALL.

"Oh Walter, must we—must we give up hope—Can nothing——" Isabel pressed close to Dr. Jourdan's side, and she hid her face upon his shoulder. She could not conclude her broken questionings.

He put his arm about her, replying, "I have done my utmost and have failed to stimulate a returning vitality. I believe that she is dying of a broken heart. Physical violence may be a primary, but I don't think it the immediate cause of her rapid sinking. If she would join her will to mine, the effects of the physical injury might be overcome. But she does not. She says that she has—no hope for the future—on earth.

"Yes dear: I've 'reminded her of Connie'. She only replies, 'My past would drag him down. He will best succeed in life—without me!'

"Now darling I'm going home. Send Dennis, if I am needed." And he kissed his betrothed and took his departure.

It was midnight. For days past Jane Stanhope had been growing weaker. She was no longer able to occupy her chair. She lay upon a couch in a room near Isabel's, and two nurses, in alternate attendance, carefully watched and ministered to her comfort.

But Isabel was there much of her time also. She sat now by the bedside, her large sympathetic eyes wistfully fixed on Jane's beautiful face. It wore a radiance

almost startling. Its fairness so contrasted with the glossy dark of the lustrous hair, pushed back from the white forehead! The large black eyes! There was in them a look which besought. It implored, "Let me go."

Isabel's heart was heavy. She had planned confidently upon this woman's recovery. She had looked forward, with happy expectations, to Jane's return home, confident that she would find happiness there. Her brothers, also, were anxious for this. How much indeed had she to live for! Her son was a boy to be proud of. Ample means were at command for the maintenance of the mother and the education and future use of the son.

But, day by day the pallor deepened upon that face. Day by day those hands responded with feebler pressure to the clasp that Isabel gave. Must she leave all, just at the threshold of reclamation? Affluence, happiness, opportunity for the accomplishment of so much good! Must she now take the long journey into the Great Beyond!

These thoughts occupied Isabel, as seated at her bedside, she watched the woman whose life had so mysteriously touched her own.

Turning with an affectionate look, Jane said, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Clifford, to have you lose your 'beauty sleep'. Won't you leave me now? Won't you go and get your rest?"

Isabel's eyes returned the affection, but she did not acquiesce in Jane's request. She avoided doing so. She bent nearer and said, "Call me——'*Isabel*'."

"*Is-a-bel!*" slowly repeated Jane speaking the name *softly.* "*You have* indeed been kind to me. I love *you. I may say that now.* Your precious name is one

that I shall carry to Christ. Yes; *your* name—and Connie's. I take them both with me."

Isabel was too agitated, at once to make reply. Finally she looked up and urged, "Think of Connie—your brothers—Crissie. Think—*of me*. How many there are here who love you! Indeed you have much to live for—now. Won't you try and stay with us?"

"You've told me about Jesus;" answered Jane, leading away from Isabel's recall to earthly ties. "When I see Him, may I not say that you sent me?"

"But not so soon;" pleaded Isabel: "not so soon."

"Don't He care for me to come now?" asked Jane.

No answer; and Isabel hid her face on the bed.

Jane stretched her hand and fondled softly the bowed head. "Yes," she went on with love in her low tones, "I shall tell Jesus that but for you I might never have come to know Him. To care for Him, I mean. I knew *of* him, before; but then I only dreaded Him."

Isabel raised her face. Her eyes were blurred. She could not, she wished not to believe that death was near. Of late, she had lost confident hope of ultimate recovery. But weeks, and perhaps months, had been in her mind as intervals, yet, before the separation. A fear now came that perhaps "days" only intervened ere the end. How would she have been startled to know that only "*hours*" remained!

"*Must* you go?" she asked at last, tremblingly.

"I think I want to;" Jane answered. Then after a few moments' quiet reflection, "Perhaps though, it is a selfish desire. Ought I to prefer living, that I might atone for the past?"

"Christ atones for all your past;" softly whispered *Isabel.*

"*Ah yes.* You brought me that blessed, the

heavenly comfort:" and Jane looked with loving thankfulness into the face of the woman whose hand had been stretched to her in extremity.

A long silence followed, broken at last by Jane, who asked, "Can I see Connie?"

This unexpected request greatly alarmed Isabel. It was already past midnight. What could this singular desire imply!

"Don't be alarmed," Jane reassured. "All hours have been the same——with us; with Connie and with —me. He will— He will not think it strange. Tell him——I want to love him."

With a throb of painful apprehension Isabel gave directions to the nurse, and Connie was called. Soon he came softly into the room. Isabel scrutinized him closely. Was he apprehensive? Did he realize the import of so unusual a summons?

The boy truly was alarmed, and he showed anxiety and emotion as he hastened to his mother. But he had no thought about her dying. This possibility had been put away from all their thoughts. It was a dreaded "perhaps" that no one would entertain.

She stretched her arms toward him. In dire extremity, how often before had he been her succor!

Without a moment's hesitation he climbed upon the bed. He raised his mother. Then placing himself at her back he drew her head down until it rested on his breast. Softly, as before, he stroked her hair. Softly, as before, his hand pressed with loving delay upon her forehead, or passed with a tender pressure down her cheek; holding, for the moment, her face in affectionate embrace, close to him.

"Has not God been good to me?" she whispered softly to Isabel.

But Isabel could not answer. She was struggling to control herself.

"You won't forget him?" Jane implored.

Isabel bent forward and kissed the boy. It was the only answer she dared trust herself to make.

There was a stir in the nursery and Crissie's voice was heard. Jane turned, and her face sought Isabel's with an expression which asked, but hesitated to pronounce. There was a sorrowful pathos of humility in the speechless request.

Isabel understood: and again the nurse received whispered words of direction. Going out, she shortly returned with little Crissie, in her white night-robe. The baby stretched her arms to the mother. Isabel sat upon the bedside and took her. Jane looked with intense eagerness at the child.

"Do you want her?" Isabel asked.

"If I might——" There was a glad look of happiness, as Isabel lifted little Crissie forward and placed her in Jane's arms.

Weak arms now! But lovingly were they folded about the child. Crissie cooed her contentment, and her pretty head drooped with sleepy satisfaction against the breast where so often during days of peril it had found loving protection. Jane's eyes were closed, but her face was lifted. Tears forced from the shut lids, and her lips moved in silent thankfulness. Then, with eyes yet wet, she turned her face and asked of Isabel,

"You forgave me—long ago?"

"'Long ago,'" answered Isabel, "I forgave you and loved you for the love you gave to her."

"I should never dare to seek Jesus," (her eyes raised, and her lips motioned "beyond,") "had I been restored to you." Then she lifted the little

both in one of her own: she bent her head and pressed them to her lips. Many moments passed and still she held them there. The little one fell fast asleep. At last Jane raised her head and repeated in a low happy voice,

"And He, also, has forgiven me." Then she softly relinquished the sleeping child to Isabel who received and gently carried little Crissie back to her crib.

Mother and son were now left alone together; but the mother only, knew that the earthly leave-taking was at hand. She let her head fall back until it rested on Connie's shoulder. With a painful effort she raised and clasped both arms backward about his neck, and in a long lingering caress she pressed his cheek to her lips. Then she bade him lay her back upon the pillow. He did so, afterwards standing at her side.

"Kiss me——good-night?" she asked. Connie bent and kissed her. Again her arms with uncertain effort clasped about his neck, and she whispered, "Love her always, darling."

"Indeed I do love her;" answered Connie, well comprehending the allusion.

"Yes, but *always*."

"Yes, 'always';" joined Connie. "You must get well soon;" he urged, "for she has many plans for you."

Something there was though, so placidly sweet and heavenly in his mother's countenance, as her eyes dwelt lovingly on his face, that strangely affected Connie. But he perceived not the end—now so near.

And thus she let him go; but with one more long embrace, telling him that God was good. That he *must never forget Him*; never neglect Him. That *angels on earth were His* messengers, and that Crissie's

mother was one of those angels. "And this is why, my darling boy, I say to you, 'Love her always'."

When Isabel returned, Connie had gone. "You'll ask the doctor also to befriend him?" pleaded Jane.

"Comfort yourself;" Isabel answered. "We love him. We both love him dearly."

Jane *was* comforted; and now she besought Isabel to go herself and seek her rest. "I am well provided for," she urged, "and I can send for you should I really need you."

"You'll promise then to call, if you—if you are not better;" concluded Isabel, striving to control the quivering in her voice, and almost at a loss how to express herself.

"Oh yes;" readily consented Jane. "I am easy to-night." She did not add, perhaps she did not know, that it was the satisfied content often accompanying mortality, when quietly sinking to death: that final painless exit which concludes the turbulent experiences of what of pain and struggle have preluded it.

Isabel pressed her palm upon Jane's forehead in a silent caress, and then she left her. And again the long quiet night hours passed——one by one: and each completed cycle, signaled in chimes upon the pretty time piece near her head, brought the tired traveler nearer home.

Toward morning a feeling of faintness came upon her and she touched the bell at her bedside. Immediately the nurse, who watched in the room adjoining, came to her side. "What is it?" she asked.

Jane did not answer, but something in her face as she turned it toward the attendant, alarmed the we *and she hastily* summoned Mrs. Clifford.

When Isabel came she paused but a momen

noting that look. She went quickly and dispatched a servant for Dr. Jourdan. Returning immediately to the sick room she came close to Jane and took one of her hands.

"Do not call him;" Jane said, partially roused by the soft pressure that she recognized.

Her mind was upon Connie. Isabel thought that she referred to Dr. Jourdan. "But I have sent for him;" she answered gently.

Jane was troubled. Opening her eyes she urged faintly, "But I bid him good-bye." Then after a pause she requested again, "Please—let him sleep."

Isabel understood her now. "I will not call him;" she whispered in reply.

Very soon Dr. Jourdan came in. He bent a moment over the bed; then said to Isabel, "She is going—she is almost there."

The sinking woman looked toward them. The radient light from the threshold of heaven was already upon her face.

They stood together close by the bed-side; the doctor's arm thrown in support around Isabel. Both were strangely affected. Tears slowly and silently followed down Isabel's cheeks. She stood nearest Jane, still holding her hand. The doctor's eyes were moist. He waited silently.

Jane's lips moved, and Isabel bent over her. The voice was low: the expression almost inaudible.

"I shall tell Him—I shall tell Him—" She was repeating these words softly to herself.

And, as once before, these two watched at the *couch of this woman.* Stricken *then* to death, though *they did not know* it. Dying now. They watched *with suppressed* breaths and in mournful sadness. They

watched, too, for her waking. But not now an earthly recall. It was a peaceful rest, and heaven awaiting beyond, that they anticipated for her, feeling sure that the awakening would bring forgiveness and acceptance, to the tired broken sufferer.

To the hand which Isabel already held, Jane now joined her other: and with both she clung, as to the hand of a guiding angel, even to the parting aside of those curtains through which she passed into The Realm of The Infinite.

CHAPTER XXXI.

RAVELLINGS GATHERED AND TIED.

WHILE this narrative is complete in itself, it is prefatory to what yet remains for relation. We have thought, that at some future time we might continue the recital in a story entitled,

"CHRISTINE."

Before doing so, however, let us wait upon what temper of reception shall be accorded THE MYSTERIOUS BEGGAR.

Meantime, not to to leave the reader in perplexed uncertainty as to characters thus far followed:—

The "boodle" upon which Burle and Jowl had counted, as we have seen, was disrupted by Isabel Clifford's daring interposition and rescue of her child.

Jowl escaped such fixable complicity in the premises, as might, at that time, have enabled his joint indictment *with Burle.* He remains still at large, continuing *the prosecution* of his deceptive system. It is a

lucrative pursuit, in a "money-getting" interpretation; and will continue thus to be, so long as a slow-to-believe public, tolerates and submits itself to his practices.

Burle was less fortunate. Under an indictment presented by the Grand Jury, he was tried upon a criminal count, drawn under a law which enacts as follows:—

> "Every person who shall maliciously, forcibly or fraudulently lead, take or carry away, or decoy or entice away any child under the age of twelve years, with intent to detain and conceal such child from its parent guardian or other person having the lawful charge of such child, shall upon conviction be punished by imprisonment in a State Prison not exceeding ten years, or by imprisonment in a County Jail not exceeding one year, or by fine not exceeding five hundred dollars, or by both such fine and imprisonment."

The Jury found him "guilty"; and The Court gave him——"Ten Years," the full penalty, in the State's Prison at Sing Sing. On account of Jane's death, and also as made further uncertain, because of Mrs. Clifford's interruption of Dr. Jourdan's plans for procuring convicting testimony, the indictment contemplated under the Statute for "Procuring Charity Under False Pretenses," was not presented.

Subsequent to Burle's trial and sentence, Jane's son *was fully recognized* by his Uncles. Both had remained *unmarried. John, the* younger, was rapidly failing from *brain difficulty and* nervous disorder, brought on by

over-application to business. With great care and solicitude Connie accompanied him abroad, whither he went with a purpose to recover lost health. But he had delayed too long, and his life went out in sunny Italy. Soon thereafter his nephew returned home alone.

Jane's father died a widower, and without further issue. The decease of the remaining bachelor brother, Theodore Sr., following some years later, left Connie the only surviving lineal descendant; and he inherited, therefore, the immense property of his grandfather, Theodore Duncan.

Long before this, however, he had accomplished a through course of literary and business culture, and was well fitted to manage the great estate which thus descended to him.

Dear little Crissie developed mentally and physically into a noble womanhood, strengthened by many virtues and graced by every fitting accomplishment. It may well be supposed that Connie never forgot his little sweetheart. As she grew into lovely girlhood, we may be sure that her mother, and, too, her "Papa Walter", as she learned to call him, many times recounted to her, the early chronicles of her baby life. Nor did they forget to include loving account of the boy-hero, whose devotion redeemed a mother, and interposed also to protect the little waif that destiny had temporarily confided to his care.

It may well be supposed, furthermore, that this narrative, so thrilling, made a deep impression on her mind: and perhaps—her heart. It is our intention, in the continuation contemplated, to take up and follow further the future of the younger characters [illegible] s *sketch. Certain it is*, that a [illegible] ndant deversity *esting circumstance* and thrilling incident, many

lives of these personages, following through and finally culminating—But we will not anticipate.

Connie, as he grew older, developed some very decided opinions respecting a feasible and practical system of reclamation for the poor. These he had undant means for carrying out.

Among other of his benevolent efforts in this relation, and as a memorial to his mother, he founded and endowed a "Home", which he named, "The Sisterhood of Rescue". Here were domiciled a noble band of women, whose works and offices among the poor, and especially in behalf of unfortunate girls, made a record which angels might have kept.

Burle, after the expiration of his "term", came forth a more desperate and a more daring villain than we have found him in these pages. We may well suppose that, remembering the principal evidence upon which he was convicted, he should also remember the witnesses who gave it: and, too, with revengeful feelings.

But bad schemes and wicked purposes, though they may for the time harass with apparent success, in the end are brought to confusion, and whelm the wrong-doers in overthrow. Burle's and Jowl's cases were not exceptions: and their ultimate discomfiture was tragic, terrible, and final.

Unwittingly instrumental in this retributive conclusion, were three other characters. We have already become somewhat acquainted with them, but have only *partially* noted their histories:—Jonathan Hildred, Burle's grandfather; Maggie, the wife whom he so cruelly treated; and Maggie's child.

Mr. Hildred had finally persuaded this brave and unfortunate young mother to return with her little son. She took up her abode at the Hildred mansion; managing the affairs of the household. This advent brought the first sunshine that for many years had come to gladden a lonely man's abundantly provided but sombre home. The presence of this woman and her child, made happy the last years of the good man's life.

Jonathan Jr., Maggie's son, grew in Mr. Hildred's love and favor, assisting him with remarkable skill and efficiency in the management of his business; and his great-grandfather made him, finally, the principal beneficiary and devisee under his will: this interest to vest after his majority.

A few years of quiet happiness, and Mr. Hildred died:—and now, this testamentary expectancy was the sole legal obstacle between Burle and the great wealth left by his grandfather.

Immediately thereupon, Burle, aided and counseled as usual by Jowl, planned a robbery and a murder. By the first, they reckoned upon a large booty for temporary necessities. The success of the second, although it would make a father guilty of the horrible crime of parricide, would also defeat the purpose of his grandfather's will, and make *Burle* heir at law of the immense property, testamentarily carried forward, and soon to vest in the great-grandson.

But the vigilance of God never sleeps!

The wife, whose earlier life Burle had burdened with suffering, warned by The Invisible Influence, and receiving also the timely coadjuvency of others, who had also borne distress at this monster's hands, was instrumental *in frustrating* this diabolical plan of her cruel *husband's. And in its* thwarting, both Burle and Jowl